MYSTERY MAGAZINE

10 CENTS
FEB. 15, 1922

VOL. IV
No 103

FEATURE STORY

A MUSEUM MYSTERY

by

Jack Bechdolt

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Vol. IV. FEBRUARY 15, 1922 No. 103

ISSUED TWICE A MONTH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURE STORY

A MUSEUM MYSTERY. By Jack Bechdolt 3

SHORT STORIES

THE COURAGE OF IGNORANCE. By Katherine Stagg 20
MISS LETHRIDGE, THE CAT. By O. W. Simons 29
THE TOKEN OF FIRE. By Bayard Yadon 37
THE MAN IN CHANCE STREET. By Jackson J. Smith 41
THE DROPPED JEWEL. By Kenneth Anderson 48

DEPARTMENT

ASTROLOGY—THE MYSTERY OF MAN AND HOW TO SOLVE IT. By Russell Raymond Voorhees 52

MISCELLANEOUS MATTER

SMUGGLERS' TRICKS 18
FORGERIES DETECTED BY THE MICROSCOPE 19
OSTRICH TREES LOOK LIKE MAMMOTH BIRDS 27
STRANGE NEW ENGLAND TRIBE 28
THINGS SOME PEOPLE SWALLOW 36

CURRENT NEWS

YOUNG LADY WALKS ELEVEN MILES IN HER SLEEP——WHY CANARY BIRD BRINGS HAPPINESS——DESERT WASTES MAPPED BY AID OF RADIO TIME 57
COPPER SNAKE FOUND——LIGHTNING FREAK——RED SNOW IN AMERICA——NO GHOSTS AT ALL 58
RUINS OF INCREDIBLE AGE——NO MYSTERY——PILES OF PAPER TAKE THE PLACE OF WOOD——BOTTLES BY MACHINERY 59

Copyright, 1922, by Frank Tousey, New York. All rights reserved. Entered as Second-Class Matter November 5, 1917, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Published by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 168 West 23d Street, New York.

Harry E. Wolff, President; C. W. Hastings, Treasurer; Charles E. Nylander, Secretary.

LU. SENARENS, Editor.

Notice.—No letters will be answered or manuscripts returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. The publishers disclaim responsibility for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts. Authors to save time will please name price desired for submitted material.

Subscription Price: Domestic, Single Copy, 10 Cents; Domestic, Yearly, $2.50; Canada, $2.75; Foreign, $3.00.

All remittances should be sent by express money order, P. O. order, check, registered letter, or draft to insure safety. We will not be responsible for money sent otherwise.

See What's Coming

AS you can see, we have begun publishing the series of psychological articles which we have been advertising for some time past. The one in this number concerns the ancient art of astrology. It shows you exactly how professional astrologers go about casting your horoscope, and the author has written his explanation so simply that you can do your own casting by following the rules laid down in the article. In our next issue we are going to publish an article on palmistry, the science of reading character by means of the hand. You must not fail to get that article, as it will afford you no end of useful information, and give you the opportunity of reading any one's palm. There are full explanations of how it is done. No need of going to faking fortune-tellers. The article on palmistry will tell you all that the quacks tell, and a great deal more. Every succeeding number of the magazine is going to contain an entertaining article on the different kinds of sciences, so you may look forward to a rare treat.

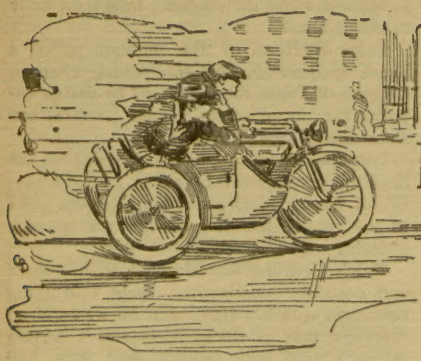
The feature-story in our next number is entitled "The Little Red Book" and is a powerful romance of the underworld. The author is an authority on this subject, a man who has been a detective, and has actually witnessed and participated in many of the scenes he describes in his novelette.

Among the short stories is a gem from that talented author William Hamilton Osborne, entitled "The Till-Tapper." Caroline Bingold contributes a story called "Cobwebs," and Fred H. Hayn a story of mystery, "From the Unknown to the Known."

In addition, there will be a collection of short articles on a diversity of queer and unusual events, that cannot fail to please our friends.

We wish to thank hundreds of our readers who have written to us commending the marked improvement we have made in this publication. And we wish to assure them that we intend to keep on improving it with each succeeding number until we have made it just exactly what they want.

THE EDITOR.



A MUSEUM MYSTERY

by Jack Bechdolt

CHAPTER ONE

IN THE ARMOR ROOM

THE Manhattan Museum, that palace of gray sandstone that covers more of upper Fifth avenue than the palace of the proudest king of fable and contains riches such as no monarch ever dreamed of owning, blazed with light that sent glittering reflections across the wet asphalt when democratic bus and aristocratic limousine passed in endless tide. Its great doors stood wide for a gala evening.

The museum was presenting the last of the season's popular symphony concerts.

The central hall was packed to capacity with music lovers who sat and stood and huddled with what comfort they could find. The balcony above was filled as thickly again. Far back into the spacious gallaries for pictures, statuary, rare glazes, silks, furniture and treasures of every nature were crowds sitting rapt under the spell of music which came to them in tender echoes. For so far away as the ear could distinguish a note there were listeners.

The various pictures presented by this unusual spectacle find no duplicate in modern civilization. The spacious hall itself, where the musicians played from their balcony, was hung with tapestries of splendid hues and rare designs, triumphs of the royal factory of the Gobelins woven for the delight of kings long dead. In chambers where stood marbles by Phidias and Praxiteles and chariots of old Pompeii; in rooms where the choicest works of masters of the brush and palette, Raphael, Rembrandt, Reubens, Hals — all the great — were hung; leaning on cases that sheltered the rarest Satsuma or the most gorgeous of ancient Persian scripts or the jewels and objects of art Cellini's hand once set for the delight of cardinals; grouped about the masterpieces of Michael Angelo in varied garb and democratic mingling, drawn by love of fine music were the heirs to all this wealth, thousands of them, the people of New York, aristocrats and commoners together.

Theirs was the palace and all the treasures in it, held in common fee. For the humblest garment workers of the lower East Side who came by subway as well as the most powerful financier who came by limousine, the orchestra played, the lights shone and the art treasures of civilization that began in the greatness of Babylon shed their luster.

In and out through the quiet, listening crowds passed various men in uniform and in plain clothes whose steps were quiet and eyes keen.

They were the guardians of all that wealth. Their task was to see that no person weak or criminal should be tempted beyond resistance.

Strangely, perhaps, their task seemed an easy one. Men who had not one dollar to rub against another and women who counted a miserable pittance fair return for hours of drudgery were separated from plunder beyond dreams of avarice by nothing more than plate glass, oftener still by nothing more than conscience, yet they conformed to the law as strictly as though bars of steel and walls of granite stood between them and temptation. The common conscience could be trusted.

It was not such people that the museum guards had to fear. What they did fear, what kept them ever alert, was the cunning criminals, the professionally crooked to whom the opening of the great treasure house to such crowds at night was the rarest opportunity to loot in the history of crime.

When the wealth of nations is gathered in one spot and left at the mercy of thousands there is ever the chance that somewhere in that crowd is at least one man of deft hand and cunning brain who will improve his chance.

For that man the museum police and their associates, the detectives assigned from the metropolitan divisions, were on the alert.

The crowd being attracted by music, it followed naturally that at a point where the music could no longer be clearly heard the people thinned out. For instance the great wing devoted to the glories of ancient Egypt was empty except for half a dozen loiterers and the tomb of Abak, high priest of the temple of Osiris stood as empty and as silent as it had stood for centuries buried under desert sands, brooding on the vanished greatness of the Pharaohs.

The high priest's tomb occupied the floor space of a small house, and was indeed a house of no inconsiderable solidity. Stone by stone the structure had been removed from its original place beside the ancient Nile by one of the museum's expeditions for exploration and stone by stone it had been set up again in the museum, every carving, every detail of its labarynthine passages exactly as the slaves had built it centuries before to receive the body of the high priest.

And in the place of sepulture, in the very heart of the queer structure, stood the carved sarcophagus and the swathed, mumified body of Abak himself.

Ralph Bedford of the museum police, a blond, well-set-up, soldierly-looking chap in his gray uniform, found himself by design entering the portal of the ancient tomb at exactly nine-forty-five o'clock.

His disappearance into the doorway of the dead was accompanied by a long, cautious survey of the corridors about him, lest the chief of the guards, prowling everywhere on such a night, might by chance be near.

Ralph Bedford was devoted to his work and normally conscientious about everything connected with his duty. But he was still on the right side of thirty years and a certain young woman with reddish gold hair had promised to meet him in the heart of Abak's tomb at exactly nine-forty-five. And Ralph, finding everything exceedingly quiet and orderly along the rooms and corridors he watched, saw no harm in the rendezvous.

The red-haired girl was where she had promised to be. Her name was Claire Rowe and she was Ralph's foster-sister—more than that, his sweetheart. Claire's own mother had died while she was less than two years old and Ralph's mother had taken her into her home.

Claire greeted the young guard with a smile and a quick clasp of her warm hand. "I was afraid you wouldn't come," she said. "And I was getting scared, all alone in this awful place!"

"Nonsense, dear! You're not afraid of Egyptians who have been dead hundreds of years? They're harmless old boys!"

"To-night I seem to be. I don't know why. And I got to looking at all the pictures painted on these old stones, all the wars and slaves in chains and sacrifices. See, like that awful looking thing there!"

"That?" Ralph laughed. "That's not a bloody sacrifice! That's just one of their old religious pictures. It shows the weighing of the heart of the dead priest Abak in the Hall of Double Truth in the presence of Osiris, judge of the dead. Those are gods and god-

desses. Nobody's being tortured, it's all mythology."

"Just the same," Claire exclaimed, her hand on the guard's arm, "it scares me tonight. I know it's foolish, but—— Can't we talk in a pleasanter place that this, Ralph?"

The girl's fine gray eyes turned from one to another of the ancient carvings on the sandstone walls, pictures that still bore the dull colors laid by artists dead for centuries, and she shuddered.

"It's quieter here—and the chief not so likely to notice me," Ralph murmured. "But we'll chance finding a change of scene. At least I've seen you a minute, and that's enough to keep me happy through one night!"

"Silly!"

The sweethearts stole out of Abak's tomb with much the same stealth you would imagine in Romeo and Juliet or perhaps some Pharaoh's daughter and her lover of long ago, only its portal brought them not to a desert moon and the sight of the glistening Nile, but the highly modern corridors of the museum and the sound of distant music.

Yet for all that as they passed a row of giant figures in black marble, a solemn, weird row of lioness-headed deities staring down on them in the dusk, Claire Rowe shuddered again and pressed the closer to the young guard's side.

"I should think you'd go crazy staying in such a place alone all night!" she exclaimed. "Surrounded by all these awful mummies, by the painted sarcophagi, these weapons and clothes and jewels — everything dusty and — dead."

"On the contrary, I find it very jolly. If a fellow has a little taste for learning things, believe me, time passes fast enough here. Every night I pick up a little information on a new subject. And as for being alone—well, we're not much. The patrols are always meeting regularly, there is inspection besides and a chance to chew the rag with a chap once in a while. No, it's plenty good enough—but here's the armor room empty, for a wonder. Come over by the old forge."

What Ralph Bedford said to Claire or Claire said to Ralph during the next ten minutes has little to do with this tale. Their chat was entirely satisfactory to them.

Beside a quaint forge used by some armorer of the middle ages, surrounded by the semblance of armored knights, some mounted on wooden horses bearing banners and lances, others afoot, all about them racks of halberds and pikes, swords, spurs, casques, breastpieces, greaves, crossbows, daggers and dirks, they murmured to each other while Ralph kept an eye bright for his prowling chief.

"I can't stay longer," he finally said with reluctant firmness. "Good-night, Claire!" He held out his arms and she came to them swiftly. But as their lips met Claire Rowe drew away with a muffled cry. The pupils of her eyes grew wide and staring with fright.

"What—what is it?"

She pointed shakily over his shoulder.

"There — that suit of armor there! I — Ralph, I'll swear I saw — I saw ——" She lowered her voice to a whisper. "I saw eyes watching us from the slits in the helmet. A man's eyes!"

Her terror was real enough to impress Ralph for the moment. He stepped quickly to the upright suit of armor, peered at the helmet, rapped his knuckles tentatively on the breastplate.

"What is it, Bedford?"

Ralph turned to find Sanders, the chief of the guards, watching curiously.

"Nothing, sir. I thought this thing looked a bit loose, that's all."

There was no chance to say farewell to Claire.

Warned of the interruption she had assumed the attitude of any visitor, peering into a case of Italian stilettos and so moving away slowly.

Ralph, taking up his rounds, was conscious of the flash of her fine gray eyes from far across the great hall, her silent benediction and good-night.

"Silly girl, to get scared," he thought affectionately.

"I am silly," Claire was thinking at the same time. "Yet there's something about tonight — about this place. I'm afraid for Ralph!"

She left the museum in that mixed state of mind, her reason arguing against a feeling she could not explain.

For lack of a more explicit term women

call the feeling intuition. Sometimes it has an uncanny resemblance to the seer's fabled ability to read the future.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RUBY OF MARDUK-NASIR

THE waiting room that led to the private office of Osborne Huntoon, curator of the Manhattan Museum, was crowded the morning after the last symphony concert.

Fresh visitors arrived constantly. Each brought with him a badly suppressed air of excitement that added to the sum total of restlessness and produced the effect of some impending event that would startle the city.

The several secretaries of the curator were kept busy interviewing these visitors, instructing them to wait and answering the many summonses from the inner office where Osborne Huntoon already was at work, a good two hours ahead of his usual schedule.

In fact the entire museum staff had a heavy eyed, slightly disheveled, very badly scared expression that suggested they had been summoned from their beauty sleep to attend to very important business.

Members of the night shift of guards crowded the room. Most of them were now in civilian dress.

There were several men of wealth and fashion who waited with bad grace.

There were also uniformed police coming and going and holding low-toned conferences with the secretaries or among themselves.

Other men in plain clothes bore the unmistakable signs of the profession of man-hunting.

Finally there arrived a group of five young men whose announced business caused a decided stir and looks of alarm among the office force. They were gentlemen from the press, the reporters for the evening newspapers, and it was evident from the fluttered manner in which they were begged to wait a short time on the convenience of Osborne Huntoon that their presence, while not exactly welcome, came at such a time that they took on the status of diplomats from the leading powers.

A rather short, broad-shouldered man in loose fitting gray clothes, wearing an old-fashioned black string tie, came into the office. He was a man of middle age, robust and gray-haired. His smooth-shaven face was creased and lined and the small eyes had a friendly, shrewd twinkle for everybody.

His manner toward the spruce young secretary who took his card seemed almost deferential, yet the effect of that card was to send the secretary at a half-run for the private office of the curator. In less than a moment the man in gray clothing took precedence over all the room, for he was hastily ushered to the curator, while a-look of surprise, inquiry and speculation went about among the watchers.

Osborne Huntoon, the curator, raised a haggard face in which relief, almost a smile, was making itself evident as the secretary announced "Professor Ford Markman."

The two men clasped hands and Markman sat down close to the curator's desk.

"I take it something hellish has happened, judging by the looks of your reception-room?" Markman said.

"The very devil is to pay," the curator groaned. "Believe me I wouldn't intrude on your time for any other reason. But, Markman, here's something where we must have your help. It's not only that the museum stands to lose something like a quarter of a million dollars. The actual money loss, even though it isn't half covered by insurance, we can stand. But our loss in prestige, our loss in reputation! Man, if we don't recover from what's happened in the next forty-eight hours I tell you we stand to lose millions in loan collections trusted to us by the most influential men in America. Yes, and we may lose millions more in future gifts and appropriations because of this! Markman, for God's sake, old friend, stand by us now!"

"What is it you need?" Ford Markman asked, staring at Huntoon's vehemence.

"A detective—a real detective! One who can read riddles. I need a man who can do what no other police or private detective in New York can do."

"But why ask me?"

"Because you are the man! Yes, you know it, Markman. I know your connection with the police ended long ago. I know we can't

tempt you with money. But you always have been a friend of the museum and — my friend."

"I am your friend still."

"Then you'll help me?"

"My dear Huntoon! Why ask? If I can."

"Let me tell you," said Huntoon with a sincerity that was impressive, "your saying that much gives me more hope than anything that has happened this morning. If you will help——"

"Save time! Tell me what has happened."

Osborne Huntoon lowered his voice:

"It's the ruby of Marduk-Nasir!"

"Gone!" Markman exclaimed.

The curator nodded slowly.

"Gone! Gone some time during the night. And not a trace of anything disturbed. The case is intact, looked as it always has been. The other jewels of the collection, all of them, just as they were. But the ruby——"

"One of the world's most famous jewels," Markman mused. "Loaned by Collinson, the billionaire oil man, wasn't it? H-m! And of course the moral effect of the news that the ruby could be stolen from the museum——"

"That's it exactly! Do you see this robbery is likely to ruin the museum?"

"You are quite right. We must get back that ruby! Now, please, all the details."

CHAPTER THREE

ONE MAN MISSING

OSBORNE HUNTOON, the curator, stated the case to his friend Professor Ford Markman, referring to notes and memoranda for the details.

Just as the Egyptian wing was one of the chief prizes of the Manhattan Museum so was the gem room of that wing its most famous ornament.

There in cases of steel and plate glass were displayed the jewels and ornaments of Pharaohs and the daughters of Pharaohs. So clearly lighted and so close to the eye it seemed almost one was handling them, yet protected by electric burglar alarm systems from any attempt at tampering, were the amulets and toilet articles of soft gold and ebony, the necklaces of lapis lazuli and crystal, the diadems and staffs and insignia cunningly carved, gem-crusted, many of them as bright and new as the day they had left the hands of the artificers.

Most famous of that collection was a great ruby, known as the ruby of Marduk-Nasir. The gem once had been the property of a Pharaoh. More than a century ago it had been looted from a tomb by Arabs. Since then its history had been written in blood and deeds of violence until its sinister reputation made it blood-brother to the Hope diamond and others of a half-dozen infamous stones. It's present owner, Collinson the oil billionaire, had given it gladly into the keeping of the museum.

That, briefly, is the history of the lost stone as Huntoon gave it and as Markman already knew it.

Before the doors of the museum had been opened that morning the usual inspection resulted in the astonishing discovery that the ruby was gone from its case. Nothing else was disturbed. The case, apparently, had not been tampered with.

The museum was guarded as few buildings save federal treasure houses are guarded.

Indoors were the special uniformed police in attendance day and night. All night the grounds around it were patroled. Every door and window was watched. A regular patrol made the rounds of its acres of roof. From above, from below, from all avenues the great building was inaccessible once the public was shut out.

The night shift of guards changed at six o'clock in the morning. Directly the loss of the ruby was known these guards had been summoned for inspection. Even as Huntoon finished his statement Sanders, the chief of the guards, was ushered in.

Sanders looked badly worried.

"Every man but one is accounted for," he said. "Bedford, who patrols the Egyptian wing, cannot be located. I talked with his mother over the telephone. He has not been seen there since last night."

"Yet you tell me every man was accounted

for when the patrols changed this morning!" Huntoon exclaimed.

"That is true. Bedford reported off duty. More than that, one of the other men walked with him three blocks toward his home. Yet he did not go home!"

"Quite likely he had some other errand—some perfectly natural, innocent business to attend to," Markman suggested.

"Possibly," Sanders admitted. "Yet his mother tells me he never before missed his breakfast, nor his early sleep. I can believe it. He is the routine type of man, young but steady. Now he's gone and — the ruby's gone!"

"The scoundrel!" Huntoon cried. "He had access to it all through the night. If he got it he could have carried it away in his pocket."

"He could have, but did he?" Markman murmured.

"I'd hate to think it," Sanders protested. "A fine young chap, Ralph Bedford. Made a wonderful record in the war. I always thought of him as one of our best, and yet——"

"We must suspect everybody!" Huntoon said savagely.

"Oh, not at all!"

The curator and the chief guard gaped at Markman.

"Not at all!" Markman repeated cheerfully. "If we suspect everybody we'll never sift the case. There are more than four million people on this island alone. I suggest we suspect just as few as possible."

Sanders said: "Well, Professor Markman, I've heard you're a wonderful detective. I suppose you must be. But if you don't suspect anybody——"

"I didn't say *anybody*. I said as *few* as possible——"

Huntoon interrupted: "Including this man Bedford, of course! You can't deny it looks bad for him!"

"I'm sorry to say I can't. Sorry because Sanders, who is a good judge of character, seems to be reluctant to think him a criminal."

"Reluctant!" Sanders cried. "I tell you I would have trusted him with all I own!"

"Then," smiled Markman, "I'm going to believe in him in spite of circumstances——"

The telephone signal interrupted him. Huntoon lifted the ear-piece and spoke into the instrument.

The two men saw him start. He stiffened suddenly. His eyes protruded. He gasped audibly, cried out something inarticulate and, dropping the ear-piece, sank back in his chair staring and half strangling like a stricken man.

Ford Markman was first to act. He snatched up the telephone and instructed the museum switchboard operator: "Have that call to Mr. Huntoon traced at once. We must know where it came from."

Then Markman turned his attention to the curator to whom Sanders was now handing a glass of water.

"What was it, Huntoon?"

The curator replied in a voice hushed by astonishment and fear:

"Ralph Bedford, the guard. He has — stolen—the ruby of Marduk-Nasir!"

CHAPTER FOUR

MARKMAN'S QUEER NOTIONS

HUNTOON was able to tell a connected story in a few minutes. The voice on the telephone had announced itself as "Ralph Bedford, ready to talk business with you.

"You're looking for the ruby of Marduk-Nasir," said Huntoon's caller. "Don't look any further, I've got it and you can't find me until I'm ready to be found. I've got the ruby and I'm going to make it pay me for its keep. I'm not fool enough to try selling a gem like that. Of course, if you drive me to it, I could have it cut up and disposed of in bits, but I think you'll agree that would be too bad. Then, why not ransom it? I'm willing to sell it back to you. You should be willing to pay a quarter of a million to get it back, not only because you're responsible to Collinson, but to save the museum's reputation. How many loan collections do you think you'll have left by to-morrow morning if you don't get the ruby back?

"And I'm perfectly ready to talk business.

You can have until noon to think it over. I'll telephone at twelve sharp.

"And, Huntoon, if you don't meet my terms, it's quite possible I'll drop that ruby into the North River or take it out to sea and lose it. So be warned.

"And good-by, until noon."

"Bedford!" Sanders exclaimed. "So it was Bedford?"

"The unmitigated rascal!" Huntoon added. "How he did it I can't see yet, but he did it. The man must be a master criminal——"

"Or the victim of one."

"What?" They stared again at Markman.

"I said he might be the victim of a master criminal. The way the thing was done shows genius, no doubt of that. No trace of tampering with the case that guarded the ruby!"

"Bedford had plenty of time to learn how to open it!"

"Yes, that's true. But again, our criminal is smart enough to realize the full value of the jewel, which is its value to this museum, not as a salable stone."

"Bedford also would know that."

"True again. But he also shows decided ingenuity in his method of communication."

"We'll have that call traced in ten minutes!" Sanders boasted. "That's where he shows himself a fool. When we learn the booth it came from——"

"Supposing always that it came from a booth?" Markman suggested gently. "My own idea is that it came from nowhere."

"What!"

Markman was about to repeat, but the telephone signal interrupted him. Huntoon answered and presently turned on them more bewildered than ever.

"Markman is right," he said. "The telephone people cannot locate the call. It was not made from any listed instrument. In fact they also insist it came from—nowhere."

"This Bedford!" Sanders exclaimed. "Why, the man is a positive wizard of crime!" He turned on Markman with something like a sneer, "I suppose even you suspect him now, professor?"

"I'll admit he needs some attention," Markman conceded. "Let me talk with the guard who says he walked out of here with Bedford when they went off shift this morning."

The guard was sent for.

He had known Ralph Bedford several years. When he was relieved from duty he and Bedford checked out of the building at the same time. They walked four blocks together, one block north along Fifth avenue, three blocks eastward, the direction of Bedford's flat, where he lived with his mother.

There was nothing unusual in Bedford's demeanor.

They had talked for several minutes about the drizzling rain. Bedford mentioned it caused a throb in a bullet wound he bore in his leg. He said it made him think of the trenches in Flanders. A passing taxi skidded and they spoke of the danger of slippery pavements. Then Bedford's companion turned north again toward his own home with a nod. That was all.

"And all that time he had our ruby, the ruby of Marduk-Nasir, in his pocket!" exclaimed Huntoon.

"Well," said Markman, "I have still to be convinced. But I am beginning to wonder. I think I shall call on Bedford's mother, since they live so close. Be sure that nobody disturbs her or lets her know that her son is suspected. And, Sanders, here are several things I would like attended to:

"Notify the telephone company to watch for that call at noon. Notify the police to have men ready to go in any direction that the call might come from. Ask Detective Ryan to get me a report on these five names. And please send a man to my apartment with this note. My man will give him an instrument I wish brought to Mr. Huntoon's desk.

"Now, Huntoon"—Markman picked up his hat and smiled on the curator—"you sit tight where you are. Don't let anybody stampede you into making bargains while I'm gone. And don't let anybody make you think we can't get that ruby back. But we're dealing with a mighty clever crook—mighty clever—and if it's Bedford, I'm anxious to know more about him."

"Then you still refuse to believe the man is Bedford?"

"I am not a detective, as you know," Markman said gently. "I'm a professor of mathematics who has gained some reputation guessing riddles. Therefore, perhaps, I don't think

like a thief-catcher. At any rate I find it helps me to keep an open mind, Huntoon, and suspect *just as few* people as possible."

Markman smiled his way out of the office.

CHAPTER FIVE

TELEPHONE TRICKERY

PROFESSOR FORD MARKMAN was taking his leave from the modest four-room flat where Ralph Bedford had made his home with his mother and the beautiful red-haired girl, his foster-sister.

Markman had chatted with the women for almost an hour. He had presented himself in the guise of a Red Cross worker who had met and become friendly with Bedford during the war. He said he had not seen the young man since returning to America and was taking advantage of his brief stay in New York to look him up.

Thus established as a family friend and aided by his great simplicity of manner Ford Markman had small difficulty finding out what his mother and Claire Rowe thought of the missing museum guard. Ralph Bedford's history from his earliest bright sayings of babyhood until yesterday was retailed by Bedford's proud mother.

But the girl Claire followed Markman outside the flat into the public hall.

"Professor Markman, something is wrong with Ralph!"

Her exclamation was less question than accusation. Her fine gray eyes seemed to demand the truth of him.

"My dear young woman, I hope not! I'm sure that I don't know——"

Claire interrupted firmly: "And I am sure you know much more than you wish to tell his mother. There was a telephone call for him from Sanders at the museum. He has not yet come home. He never did such a thing before! Then you come! Will you tell me the truth about Ralph, Professor Markman, or must I suffer?"

"I do not want you to suffer," Markman said.

"But I do suffer! I don't let his mother know I am worried, but I am worried. Something has happened to Ralph and — I love him——"

"You are his foster-sister?"

"Yes."

"Engaged to marry him?"

"Yes."

"And why do you feel so surely that something has happened? What reason have you to think this?" Markman's manner was firm, but gentle. "Please confide in me, Claire," he added. "If you are frank, perhaps I can be equally frank. You have some reason for believing that Ralph Bedford is in trouble?"

Claire hesitated and blushed.

"I don't know that it's really a reason," she said slowly. "It was just a—a feeling. Last night when I saw him—— You see, I went to the concert and stole away a few minutes to talk with Ralph. He has such a long, lonely night on guard! So I met him."

"At what time?"

"A quarter of ten. We agreed to meet then."

"And you talked?"

"Yes, for about ten minutes. We met at Abak's tomb, but that was gloomy, so we went to the armor room."

"And he gave you reason to think something was wrong?"

"Oh, no! He laughed at my fears."

"What did he say?" Claire blushed and Markman added, smiling a little—"Besides what a sweetheart would naturally say to you, I mean."

"Why—why, very little. We talked about the drizzle. He said that scar in his leg throbs when it rains. He said something about the night making him think of the Flanders trenches, and—and that was about all, except—well, foolishness. But I was afraid all the time! I had a—a feeling! Even an empty suit of armor made me jump because I thought I saw eyes watching me from its helmet. I suppose, Professor Markman, I am very silly, but sometimes a woman believes in a feeling like that."

Markman said seriously: "My dear, I don't call that silly. Sometimes a woman's feeling about a thing is worth more than a man's reasoning!"

"Then Ralph is hurt? Or in trouble?"

Markman patted her shoulder soothingly. "I don't say that. So far as I know that is not true. And yet, perhaps later, I may have news. You must ask for me at the office of Curator Huntoon at one o'clock this afternoon. Say nothing to Ralph's mother. You'll not fail me?"

Claire promised.

"And be sure of one thing," Markman added earnestly, "if by any chance something has happened to Ralph Bedford you may have my word for it that it is nothing for which he can be blamed. Nor is it anything of which you need be ashamed."

As he left Markman murmured to himself, "And yet all the facts make it look worse for Bedford! I thought perhaps another checked out in his place this morning, but the talk he had with his companion and the talk he had with the girl—that sounds like one and the same man!

"Markman, you've got a puzzle this time! And the happiness of two women depends on your guessing the answer!"

When Ford Markman returned to Curator Huntoon's office he learned that his several instructions had been carried out under Sanders's direction.

Sanders reported that the police had placed motorcycle men in various districts ready to trace down the next telephone call from the man who announced he had the stolen ruby.

Police Detective Ryan handed him a report on the list of five names Markman had given him. This report interested the gray-haired scientist exceedingly. He nodded his satisfaction with it. By way of explanation he said to Huntoon and Sanders: "Ryan is helping me narrow down my circle of suspicion. Always a very necessary thing to do in treating with mysteries like this."

But what proved most interesting of all was the instrument a man had brought from Markman's apartment.

It was a small, hard rubber box with wires leading into it. It had a dial face marked off into minute fractions and the usual dial pointer.

Markman attached the wires to the telephone on the curator's desk. "This is a telephone detector," he said. "With the assistance of a good friend, an electrical experimenter, I devised it and it has answered ordinary tests in a very satisfactory way. But it has never been put to such a test as this!

"If you are familiar with the manner in which a break in the under-sea cables is located by measuring the resistance of copper wire you will grasp the general theory on which this dial works.

"The telephone company can trace any call over its switchboards so long as the call originates in a listed instrument. My little box here, I hope, will trace any call that comes from nowhere."

"It is almost time that rascal telephoned again," Huntoon exclaimed. "That is, supposing he will keep his word, or rather threat."

"I think he will. His hope of getting anything out of us depends on making a bargain. I'm sure I hope he will, for perhaps a great deal more than the safety of the ruby of Marduk-Nasir depends on that call!"

"What do you mean?" Huntoon and Sanders exclaimed in chorus. But Markman shook his head, impatient at the interruption.

"Let that come later," said Markman. "Time is short. Now, Mr. Sanders, when that call comes, get on another line to the telephone company at once, or better have a line kept open now. And, Huntoon, you must keep the man in conversation. You must take all the time you can contrive. Haggle with him. Discuss terms and method of paying his price. Suggest various objections to whatever he proposes. Point out where it would be dangerous to him; but, Huntoon, remember this above all things, do not let him suspect! Manage to delay as much as you can. We must have the advantage of every minute to trace him down. But if once he suspects—if he is scared off—I tell you in all seriousness a most terrible tragedy may result!"

The curator had scarcely time to indicate that he understood Ford Markman's instructions and warning before the telephone signal sounded again.

Markman reached for the instrument. "This may be him," he said. He removed the ear-piece and placed his hand over the mouthpiece for a moment while he whispered to Huntoon, "I will answer. But you listen."

"Hello, hello!" said Markman. Then he turned his eyes on the curator's face and his lips formed the words, "Is it him?"

The curator nodded.

Markman put the receiver to his own ear then and answered, "Curator Huntoon has just stepped out of his office. His secretary speaking. Yes, I will send for him at once."

At the same time Sanders, obedient to Markman's nod, hurried to the museum switchboard to communicate with the telephone company's own detectives in the hope of tracing the call.

"The curator will be here in just a moment," Markman was murmuring reassuringly, but his eye was eagerly watching the dial of the little detector he had attached to the instrument and with pencil and paper he was making a rapid calculation based on what the dial told him.

"Mr. Huntoon will speak with you now," Markman announced, passing the instrument to the curator.

Sanders burst into the room. He whispered in Markman's ear, "The call cannot be traced! It comes again from—nowhere!"

"It comes from within five blocks of this very building," Markman whispered back. "Or so the detector says. A man with a motorcycle, quickly!"

Markman and Sanders hurried from the curator's office, leaving Huntoon in conversation with the unknown.

CHAPTER SIX

UNDERGROUND

"SEND men to cover every accessible telephone within a radius of ten blocks," Markman instructed the police captain, who waited in the outer-office. "We must be sure the telephone people are not mistaken. Now, Sanders, that motorcycle—if you can run it, come with me. You are armed?"

"Yes."

They ran from the building to a waiting police machine that carried the usual side car.

Sanders mounted and Markman jumped into the car.

"Where to?" asked the chief of guards.

"Up and down Fifth avenue for five blocks each way. If that fails, up and down each cross street between for a like distance."

Sanders looked his utter astonishment, but he started the cycle and said nothing.

"And not too fast," Markman cautioned.

The motorcycle rolled south down Fifth avenue, in and out of the traffic. Markman, his hand shading his eyes, peered intently at the pavement.

Presently, at his direction, they started north again.

Busses rumbled beside them. Limousines purred past them. The noonday tide was running heavily.

Five blocks north of the museum Sanders was turning again when Markman bade him send the cycle in to the curb.

Markman leaped out of the car. "Come on!" he said. "Be ready for trouble."

In the middle of the next block a red flag was displayed, warning traffic to pass around an open manhole.

Beside the manhole stood a pushcart such as the telephone repairmen use.

Sanders followed Markman at a run and, like him, crouched above the open manhole.

Listening they heard the murmur of a man's voice.

Then as their ears became better attuned and disregarded the roar of the cars that passed so close they brushed them as they knelt there in the middle of the street, the two listeners caught a fragment of speech:

"——you are wasting my time, Huntoon. I begin to think you're up to—and remember I have the ruby of Marduk-Nasir! Take my terms or you'll never get it back——"

"Now!" said Markman.

Passengers on one of the Fifth avenue busses must have wondered at seeing two men leap suddenly into the open manhole and disappear under the asphalt.

Underground three men writhed in a life-or-death struggle.

Markman and Sanders flung themselves together on a third man who wore the working garb of a telephone repair man.

The portable line instrument through which this man had been talking was trampled underfoot.

Blows were struck and returned. The three interlocked and swayed back and forth against the sides of the hole. The heat in that small space was stifling.

Sanders's pistol, knocked from his hand, was kicked about and discharged suddenly with a terrifying noise.

The lineman's fingers met on Markman's wrist and he wrenched the arm like some wild animal.

Sanders aimed a crushing blow that caught him between the eyes even as his heavy boot caught the chief of guards in the abdomen.

And a few feet above them, totally unconscious of what was happening, passed the Fifth avenue noontime traffic, parting about the manhole obedient to the warning red flag.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A LIFE AT STAKE

OSBORNE HUNTOON, the curator, sat at his desk staring with evident dread at the telephone instrument before him.

Huntoon was puzzled, dismayed, ready to despair.

His conversation with the thief of the ruby had broken off short. An electrical crackling, then silence that baffled all his inquiries left him at sea. He did not know whether to hope or whether to give up all hope.

The man who was clever enough to outwit all the Manhattan Museum's precautions and steal a ruby watched every hour of day and night might have met his match in Ford Markman. Or again, as Markman had warned him, he might have suspected a trap in the curator's delaying telephone conversation and, taking alarm, fled from his hiding.

In that case the ruby was gone forever!

And the museum was ruined!

Huntoon groaned.

Then he sat up and stared with new interest as the door that gave on the private entrance to his office opened to admit three men.

All three were so scarred, so battered and smeared with blood and dirt that Huntoon had difficulty in knowing Ford Markman and Sanders from the third man who walked between them, on his wrists policeman's handcuffs.

"Now, Huntoon," said Markman by way of greeting, "suppose you go out and talk with the reporters who have been waiting all morning in the reception-room. Tell them that the ruby of Marduk-Nasir was removed from its case for inspection and valuation by several distinguished Dutch gem experts and will be replaced at once. Deny, of course, that it was missed or stolen. And to prove it, show them the stone. Here it is!"

Markman laid on the curator's desk a blood-red stone as large as a pigeon's egg.

"But this isn't Ralph Bedford, the guard!" Huntoon gasped, pointing to their prisoner.

"No, indeed. This is Mr. Gordon Newark, alias Gordon the Great, alias Gordon Hines," Markman announced. "He's the man who took the ruby."

"He lied when he said he was Bedford?"

"He did. Yet he told the truth when he said he had the ruby. He took no chances of its being stolen, either. He carried it about him. But show it to the newspapermen before they get any more impatient."

The curator was gone fully half an hour on this errand. When he returned Markman gave him more information about their prisoner.

"Our theories of detection differ radically, Huntoon, my old friend. You wanted to suspect everybody; I try to suspect as few as possible. I don't deny that there may be gem thieves clever enough to do what Newark did, thieves who are entirely unknown to the police or the public. In case we had to deal with such a man our task would be many million times more difficult. But following the natural line of least resistance, I chose to believe Bedford innocent and to suspect five men I know to be capable of getting that ruby. Newark was the only one of the five at present in the city and I had him accounted for by the help of the police.

"This man is probably the cleverest of his kind. I could tell you of a dozen ingenious thefts he has accomplished. The disappearance of the great Gresham diamond was one of his coups. It was on that case that Newark and I first crossed swords, eh, Newark?"

The prisoner grinned affably through the dirt that smeared his face.

"Newark," said Markman in the manner of a lecturer, "is almost clever enough to be honest. If he chose to be, he could make a decent success at a half-dozen professions. He is an accomplished actor and played leads for several years with a Los Angeles stock company. I have no doubt that helped him to impersonate the guard, Bedford, when he left the museum this morning, taking the ruby with him.

"He is also a sculptor of no mean ability. I recall in the attempt made to loot the Philadelphia mint he made a dummy figure of a watchman so lifelike it fooled a dozen keen-eyed men.

"He is also more than an amateur electrician and mechanic. I have no doubt that even the burglar alarms guarding the ruby case were not too difficult for Mr. Newark."

"Cinch!" said Newark briefly.

"There is also another thing I must give Newark credit for," Markman went on. "He is absolutely without mercy when human life stands between him and his desires. He will stab in the back; he will poison; he will employ whatever ingenious deviltry that seems necessary to his plans. I warn you we are dealing with a very devil in human form."

"Good God!" Sanders exclaimed. "How about Bedford? If he wasn't mixed up in this — and it doesn't look like it — where is he?"

"Ah!" Newark exclaimed softly. "Maybe you'd like to know that!"

Osborne Huntoon sprang from his chair.

"Bedford!" he cried. "To think I almost forgot him. What has this man done to our guard?"

"That," said Newark calmly, "is for you to find out."

The curator and Sanders exchanged a horrified stare.

"Probably murdered!" Sanders said.

"You'll never find out from me," the prisoner boasted. "Not until you're ready to talk business."

Huntoon began to pace the room, deeply moved. "This is awful!" he groaned. "What can we do? If Bedford is murdered——"

A secretary intruded. "A Miss Claire Rowe is waiting to see Professor Markman by appointment," he announced.

"Send her in, please," said Markman, and to the others, in explanation, "That's the girl who is engaged to marry Ralph Bedford."

On the heels of the secretary came Claire Rowe, pale, her eyes distressed, her lips white.

She went directly to Ford Markman.

"Don't torture me with waiting!" she sobbed. "Tell me the worst. Where is Ralph?"

Markman, Sanders and Huntoon were at a loss for an answer. But Newark said suavely: "Ask me, my girl. If you want to see him alive, ask me. I know, but I'll never tell until I get my price."

Claire looked up, met the prisoner's cold blue eyes and drew away, a step at a time, shuddering.

"What—does—he—mean?" she whispered fearfully.

Huntoon and Sanders offered her no comfort.

Their own fear of Newark matched hers.

Markman came to the rescue.

"The gentleman is joking, my dear!"

"Do you really think so, Professor?" Newark mocked. "If you choose to consider it a joke, I say I think it's rather a ghastly sense of humor you have! Joking, eh? That's good! Listen to me, young woman, if you ever expect to see Ralph Bedford alive—if you don't want him to die slowly, in agony—you'll persuade our learned friend here to change his sense of humor!"

Newark's voice grated over the words.

There was a note in it utterly devoid of human warmth.

Like the note of a file on hard steel it set the nerves quivering.

"Good heaven!" cried Huntoon miserably.

Even Sanders was moved to a muffled exclamation.

"Tell me, tell me!" Claire appealed to the manacled man, her own hands clasped in entreaty. "You don't mean what you say? Truly you don't!"

"I mean every word of it," Newark said briskly. "Listen, Markman, and the rest of you. You got me for taking the ruby. You got me with the goods. I can't deny that. I came in here last night for that very purpose.

You see, I am frank with you because I think I can afford to be frank. Yes, I have had my eye on the ruby of Marduk-Nasir for a long time. A pretty stone and very valuable to this museum. I studied out a careful plan and took advantage of the symphony concert to get at it. And this man Bedford, the guard —well, I disposed of him——"

"Dear God!" Claire cried.

"I put Ralph Bedford where he won't ever bother again," Newark boasted with utmost good-humor. "And I passed the night after I took the ruby in Bedford's clothes and make-up. I went out of here this morning as Bedford and not even Bedford's friends among the guards suspected me.

"As for Bedford, he is in a place only I know. He's alive, unharmed. Take what comfort you can from that. You'll never find him. I give you my word you won't. Or, when you do find him, he will be a long time dead. And I wouldn't promise that his death will be a pleasant one. No, not so very pleasant."

Newark smiled complacently from one to the other of the horror-stricken faces.

"Now, to get to business," he resumed. "I'm ready to trade my own safety against Bedford's, I'll trade even, and you can't ask fairer than that. Let me go, give me twenty-four hours to make my getaway, and by to-morrow there will be a special delivery letter on the curator's desk telling him where his guard is hidden. That's my proposition. What do you say, Bedford's life or my freedom?"

Newark looked about him well pleased.

"What can we do but accept?" Huntoon murmured.

Sanders shook his head in despair.

"Gentlemen, in the name of mercy!" Claire pleaded. "Ralph is everything to me. I love him. Will you see him murdered?"

"No!" Markman exclaimed, suddenly alert. "We will not see him murdered!"

"Yes, you're right. We'll make terms!" Huntoon cried.

"Fair enough!" was Newark's well pleased comment.

"But we will make no terms," said Markman sternly, finishing his sentence. "No, no, Newark, you don't get off so easily!"

The professor's face grew stern. He leveled an accusing finger at his prisoner.

"You human rat!" he snarled. "A rat, with a rat's cowardly cunning! You can frighten women and children with that talk, it gets you nothing from me. You'll go where you belong, Newark. We make no terms. God helping me, I'll find Bedford!"

"But how?" Huntoon asked.

"How?" Claire echoed.

"Yes!" Sanders added. "How can you?"

Ford Markman raised a hand, begging their silence.

"It can be done," he murmured slowly. "It is no more than a problem and the answer is in what we already know. Let me think back. Let me get the facts in hand. I'll find the answer for them."

All were silent then, watching Markman.

Huntoon and Sanders stared at his sturdy figure, the gray head bowed in his hands, as if they expected the man to do a miracle.

Claire waited with lips moving in silent prayer.

Newark, quite at ease, waited also and his lips twisted to a sneer that showed his perfect confidence in his position.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SECRET OF OSIRIS

A QUARTER of an hour dragged into a half-hour and the little group in the curator's office remained silent.

Ford Markman's head was bent low, his eyes fixed steadily before him, almost glassy with his complete concentration of attention on the riddle.

Huntoon and Sanders watched with growing evidence of their despair.

Claire Rowe was crying silently.

Newark's complacent sneer widened. His cold blue eyes defied them to read his riddle.

All started as if a pistol had been fired when Markman sighed suddenly and noisily.

"Sanders," said the professor, "have the entire north wing closed to the public. As soon as it is empty let us know."

Sanders hurried from the room. Markman

resumed his attitude of thought. The others waited impatiently for developments.

When Sanders brought word that instructions were carried out Markman rose.

"Claire," he said, "come with us. Sanders, you manage Newark and—don't hesitate to kill him if he makes a break. Come on, Huntoon."

The strange group walked through the large Egyptian section, past the grotesque black marble deities, the barbaric finery, the towering pillars with painted lotus capitals that once were the glory of the Nile.

"Take me to the armor room, to exactly where you last saw Ralph Bedford," Markman bade Claire.

The girl led them to the quaint old forge of the medieval armorer.

"You talked here?"

"Yes."

"Please stand just as you stood last night. Place me where Ralph stood."

They assumed the positions of that last interview.

"Now, tell me again, what was said. Excepting such endearments as I can easily imagine."

Almost whispering Claire repeated: "We talked of the weather a moment—how it was drizzling. Ralph said it made the scar on his leg—a wound he got in Flanders trenches—ache like a sore tooth. He said rainy weather always made the scar pain him. And he said something about the war, how glad he was he didn't have to spend another night out in the mud—under fire—in the trenches. And that—that was all, except," she sobbed bitterly, "we said we loved each other very dearly!"

"Ah!" said Markman, beaming on them all. "I see!"

He strode past Claire toward the suit of armor that stood not five feet away.

Huntoon and Sanders started forward, staring curiously.

But Newark's manacled hands, though bound at the wrists, were capable of snatching from a rack a murderous steel-headed spear. The weapon rose swiftly above his head and launched itself at Markman.

Claire's cry warned the professor.

He turned quickly enough to see the weapon glance over his shoulder.

The three men bore Newark to the floor and subdued him after a struggle.

When the prisoner was quiet again, held between Huntoon and Sanders, glaring and snarling, Markman went calmly back to the suit of armor.

Skilfully he stripped off the helmet, then the breastplate.

Huntoon and Sanders raised a simultaneous exclamation of horror.

Claire sank faintly against the old forge.

From the steel covering Markman lifted out a bundle that was no longer human and yet bore grotesque resemblance to a human form.

It was still partially swathed in yellowed linen wrappings and gave forth a dusty odor of spice.

It was stiff as wood and light as paper.

And its ghastly face was strangely shriveled and shrunken. The hands were mere claws; the feet bone, covered with parchment.

"Murdered him!" Sanders gasped.

"No. Not him." said Markman gently. "He died centuries before us. This is no other than our old friend Abak, priest of the temple of Osiris, who judged souls of the dead. Now come with me and I think I can show you Ralph Bedford."

They followed hastily as Markman led the way, down corridors and around corners, to the gateway of the tomb of Abak.

Into the dim passages of the tomb they hurried. The place of the dead, its walls rich in the symbolic carving and painting of hands that were dust these many centuries, breathed an atmosphere that chilled the blood.

Markman led them directly to the chamber of sepulture.

There, raised on a great slab of solid granite, stood the great, carved sarcophagus. And within the stone case was the case of ancient cedar, gilded and colored in crude, ghastly patterns.

The lid to that coffin was open, laid beside the platform, to show the public the body of the dead priest himself.

And peering in they exclaimed again, for there undisturbed was the swathed form of Abak, the priest of Osiris.

The shrunken, shriveled face of human

parchment stared up at them with sightless calm.

Yet they had left it but a moment before on the floor in the armor room.

Ford Markman, alone, was undisturbed.

The professor reached a rude hand into the sarcophagus. It seized the face of the dead priest and showed them—a mask of paper, cunningly contrived and painted.

And beneath this paper mask was the face of Ralph Bedford, the guard.

His eyes were open. He lived and was conscious of them.

Markman, with a pocket-knife, was busily engaged cutting the bands that swathed him and the strong ropes these bands covered, ropes that bound him into a helpless bundle.

Gordon Newark had been taken off to prison.

Ralph Bedford had told how, as he was going his rounds at midnight, he had been struck down, stripped of his uniform and bound and gagged until little more than an inanimate bundle that lived and suffered, but had no means of expression.

The young guard's horror when he found himself placed in the ancient sarcophagus, his identity concealed under the paper mask Newark had made, left alone to die in the heart of the ancient tomb of Abak, in the company of the terrible sculptured gods and goddesses of old Egypt, he could find no words to tell. But his drawn face and haggard look told much.

It needed Claire Rowe's love to heal the wounds of that experience.

Professor Ford Markman was explaining the one point that needed clearing to Curator Huntoon and Sanders.

"This is my third meeting with Gordon Newark," said the professor. "Three times I have bested him, and yet every time Newark has given me a close fight. I must admit he surprised me more than I would care to have him know this time.

"When he defied me to find Bedford I was not so badly alarmed. I knew that Newark had changed places with the guard. That meant that Bedford was still in the museum, helpless, of course, and hidden away.

"I also knew the circumstances of Newark's leaving in Bedford's uniform and just there is where the man over-reached himself in his cunning. Newark is too fond of doing a thoroughly artistic job. He impersonated Bedford too well, in other words. He talked to his companion of topics which others knew Bedford had been thinking about—the rainy night, his old scars, the trenches in Flanders.

"The other person who had talked to Bedford about these things was Claire. Since Newark knew what was on Bedford's mind it argued he had heard Bedford talking to Claire. It was not difficult, seeing where this conversation took place, to guess that Newark might have used the empty suit of armor for concealment and it was Newark's eyes the girl saw peering at her from the helmet.

"It was necessary for Newark, after overpowering the guard, to conceal his victim. It seemed logical that the place where he hid would be a good hiding place for Bedford. And that is where I underestimated my man.

"Gentlemen, when I found the mummy of the priest Abak in that armor, I'll admit to you I felt the sting of defeat!"

"But that led us to Abak's tomb at once!" Huntoon cried. "Why do you say that was defeat?"

"Because," said Markman sadly, "it showed me that Gordon Newark had out-thought me. Had I thought as he thought I would have gone to Abak's tomb and not the armor room!"

Markman sighed heavily.

He added sincerely, "Newark is my match, I don't deny it. Though he is in prison, still the honors are even."

Smugglers' Tricks

WE were watching for a diamond smuggler once, said a custom house inspector. The suspected individual had arrived and in every respect answered the description we had received. I need not say that before the steamer landed everything about the man—his baggage, the lining of his clothing, the handle of his satchel, his person, from the rim of his hatband to his toe-nails, underwent a search, but to no purpose. Apparently we were on the wrong scent. Nonchalantly sucking an orange, he stepped ashore. A keen-eyed female detective attached to the department whispered to one of our officers:

"Suppose you try that orange?"

It was done and the man turned white with vexation and anger when we found hidden in the pulp a score or more of the precious gems.

Several years ago, among a steamer passenger's effects it was reported that he had a large amount of diamonds. The information was so much in detail that even their place of concealment was indicated. They were reported to be sewed up in the seams of his garments and hidden in his boot heels.

When the ship reached port she was promptly boarded and the officers proceeded to hunt for their quarry. A passenger approaching cautiously whispered:

"I believe you are looking for a smuggler?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, there's one who gave himself away on the voyage," pointing in the direction of a handsomely dressed man who appeared to be strangely nervous.

A moment more and the officers were fumbling at the lapels of his coat.

"It's no use," they remarked, "we know what you have and where it is. Better give it up and save trouble."

Apparently crushed by the discovery, the man quietly assisted in opening the seams, and produced diamonds from various portions of his clothing.

"Your boots, please."

This rather staggered him, but he submitted with good grace; and one of the heels being unscrewed, another lot, though smaller than the first, was found there.

The gems were taken to the custom house, where the appraiser looked at them for a moment, and pronounced them to be a splendid article of paste, worth about a quarter of a dollar each. Those officers lost no time in getting back to the ship, but the near smuggler had quietly slipped away.

They traced him in a taxi to an hotel, and rushing in in hot haste, found him quietly sitting in his room.

It is needless to say that no more diamonds were found, but the officers did discover on his back the marks of the biggest kind of sticking-plaster, under which had been concealed jewels enough to buy a farm, and so recently removed that they had left their imprint on his body.

Of course a confederate had promptly taken them away, and the officers were without recourse. It is not often that a ruse in all its details is so successfully planned and practiced.

Women, continued the inspector, are even more adroit than the men, but they do not always escape the vigilance of the searchers of their own sex.

The number of contraband articles a woman can stow away is marvelous. She will conceal things in her back hair, in cakes of soap, in the belt or necktie she wears, in belts and bands, in the hollow of her bracelets—and as for her clothes, there is no end to the devices with which she will palm off embroidery, lace and all sorts of dutiable goods as a part of her personal belongings which have been in use.

She may leave London or Liverpool as graceful and petite a body as one would want to see, but on arriving in New York be as big as a three-hundred pounder.

As a rule, the fair sex, with their winning ways, obtain many favors from our men, but when you recognize one of the number who goes back and forth three or four times a year, always returning with gimcracks half made up and only waiting to be ripped apart in some milliner's establishment to become worth many thousands of dollars, you know that she is somebody's agent, who is employed to evade the law, and share the spoils that belong to Uncle Sam.

Sailors were formerly in collusion with many unsuspected customers, but of late their traffic has been broken up, though I fancy that even to-day you can find plenty of smuggled brandy, cigars and other things, in stores not far from the steamship docks.

The Chinese on the Pacific slope in smuggling opium managed their business in various ways, until they were finally discovered and checked. The favorite plan was to use hollow articles not open to suspicion, such as sticks of wood, or the handle of an oar sawed apart and chiseled out so that being put together it was a mere shell.

These were then filled with opium and dropped overboard, where they were picked up by persons on the watch.

FORGERIES DETECTED BY THE MICROSCOPE

FORGED handwriting, no matter how cleverly it be done, always differs in essential points from the original. The same is true also of disguised writing. The differences are generally visible to the naked eye, especially if this be practiced. But under the microscope they become really striking.

The Journal of the American Medical Association quotes some of the remarks of Dr. Lefrou, a French specialist, on the neglect of microscopy in cases where it is important to establish the genuineness or falsity of writing.

He advises the use of a microscope of low magnification (for example, with a 2 objective and a 4 eyepiece, without a condenser) and the soaking of the paper in benzine or xylene, which makes it temporarily transparent and will not injure it.

"Thus seen under the microscope, the handwriting stands out with peculiar modeling; it becomes a real picture with inequalities in the width of the strokes and flourishes. The broad and the fine strokes, as well as the beginnings of strokes, all have their peculiar characteristics. All these peculiarities combined give to handwriting its individuality. It is easy, therefore, to understand that when dealing with false handwriting, no matter how great the skill and facility of the writer may be, he will betray his real identity by infinitesimal differences. The care attention given to the shape of the letters will be revealed by a variation in the modeling as brought out by the microscope.

"If we consider, in addition, the accessory factors, the shape of the pen, the manner in which it is held, etc., we can readily imagine that all these factors will produce a different microscopic image than that of the forgery.

The same argument applies to the disguising of writing. A systematic study of the modeling of the microscopic image will lead to the discovery of peculiarities, in the genuine type, of such a character that by careful inspection it will always be easy to find traces of them in the disguised writing.

"The microscope discloses also erasures through the difference in tint, owing to the presence of a faint circle around the letter. A character written over another will show an uneven breadth or an irregular tinting of the strokes, as will be readily perceived by comparing such letters with others in the text."

The COURAGE of IGNORANCE

by Katherine Stagg

CHAPTER ONE

THE wind howled around the gables of a small dreary farmhouse perched against a hill in the region of the Shawangunk range in the central part of New York State. It was a chain of hills that roll up until they reach the Catskills, wild and rocky and little adapted to farming, but a few scattered homesteads here and there eke out a scanty subsistence from the stubborn soil.

Most of the people thereabout have grown fat and prosperous by taking in summer boarders, but the household of this particular farm had never turned to that lucrative means of increasing their income.

Their reputation, far and wide, was dark and sinister to the 'nth degree. For three generations they had kept the whole countryside in terror. Some had been hung in the old days, one had been electrocuted, and a few drifted away to parts unknown. The only male member of the house at present was a boy of seventeen, Jasper White by name and, by some freak of fate, as fine and honest a looking lad as one might wish to know.

At the moment we catch our first glimpse of Jasper, he was deep in the sound sleep of exhaustion at that creepiest hour, three in the morning, when the pulses are low and the vibrations of life are slowest and weakest.

In spite of the time a light burned dimly in a large room on the ground floor of the farmhouse.

Jasper stirred uneasily, as if he knew something unusual was going on in the bleak room below.

He was a youth good to look upon—dark hair that waved in a thick mass over his fine open brow, a clear skin, bronzed by wind and weather; a firm chin and a well-shaped nose.

Suddenly a voice called up the stairway, shrill and strident, cutting the silence so that it woke Jasper on the instant.

"Come on down, you! Gramma is going now, for sure."

The summons was not unexpected, for the old woman had been dying for weeks, and the boy had taken his turn in caring for her querulous wants, had tried in his clumsy way to help the poor old soul to edge out of life with as little horror as it was possible, in their comfortless and poverty-stricken state.

Flinging on a few clothes he rushed down the stairs, awake fully, although the softness of dreams still lingered in his big dark eyes.

"Oh, granny, are you feelin' worse?" he exclaimed.

"Jas—I'm goin'—goin' now—it's most all over—and a good job, too. There! Lift me—I want I should see you——" The feeble voice trailed to a whisper.

Jasper's strong young arms lifted the old bag of bones as carefully as he knew how, and yet one could see it was no case of affection, but merely the kindness of a warm and humane nature.

"Jas—good-by—— A leetle higher. There—now. I want you should swear me an oath that you will never sleep in peace until you've killed every last one of them pizen Terwilligers offen the face of the earth." The feeble voice, that had been a cackle, rose to a shriek, that awful shriek of the last great effort of age. "Swear, Jas—swear!"

"Now, granny," Jasper soothed, "you know the day has gone by for that sort of thing. Will I run and bring the preacher? Maybe he can say something fitten—I don't know how." The boy was almost inarticulate in his effort to cope with the situation.

"No, no! We ain't got no use for preachers, we Whites of Rocky Gorge. Our kin's all been killers, you know that. Your own father killed your mother with his own hands when he found Ben Miles here one night. And I said he done right. I helped him to git away. But he ain't never dared to come back. There is two Terwilligers livin' that ought to have been dead to the credit of the Whites long before now. Swear, Jas! My strength is goin'—swear!" The dying voice was horrible in its grim demand.

A strange look came over Jasper's face as he slowly let down the aged body. He lifted his right hand solemnly, gazed steadily at the filming eyes, still full of wicked fury, and in a ringing cry he uttered the pentup feeling of years:

"I swear *not* to kill, but to live down the evil that the Whites have done, to the best of my power. And I swear to try and find my father, and to prove that he did *not* kill my mother. He didn't do it—he didn't do it! He wasn't like the rest—he was good! I never believed it. He was good!"

"Curses on you and yours. A milksop in our brood—you're none of us!" the old voice screamed, but the effort had been too much and her head sagged as her wretched soul passed to its onward journey.

The slattern at the bedside looked curiously at Jasper as she said:

"Funny thing you couldn't humor the old woman when she was dyin'."

"Is she really dead? Oh—oh! Then it means a new life for me. Oh, my God! How can I live it all down?" gasped the boy.

CHAPTER TWO

DETECTIVE JOHNNY LEWIS was opening his mail in the offices of Hyde & Cleary. He had worked for them during the last five years in the capacity of their most valuable agent. It was a private detective business—a business that had grown since the world war, for murder and robbery seemed to flourish like the proverbial bay-tree since the upheaval of poor humanity. The world was engulfed in the maelstrom of ugly, uncontrolled passions.

Johnny Lewis looked like a mere boy, with big, innocent blue eyes that created confidence anywhere and everywhere. He looked so little like a detective that it became his greatest asset.

Between strenuous cases he knew the value of relaxation. With nothing special in the wind, a box of cigarettes and the morning mail always brought a broad grin to his good-natured face. He claimed that he got more "nut" letters than a matinee idol and managed to extract a lot of amusement from them.

"Say, Mack," he called to one of the assistants, "lookee here, this is a new one, a peacherina!"

"Girl?" answered Mac laconically.

"Naw; funny stuff. Listen here—no, read it yourself."

Johnny tossed the letter over the desk. Mac caught it on the fly, straightened it out and saw ruled paper and a large round hand that either was a poor disguise or that of a schoolboy.

Mac read with a lofty air of unconcern The detective business was a very serious thing to him and he had not the sense of hu

mor to enjoy its oftentimes whimsical happenings.

Rocky Gorge, New York, March 7th.

HYDE & CLEARY,
198 West 39th St., N. Y.

DEAR SIRS: I am a boy of seventeen, strong and healthy, *not afraid of anything.* I want to start in the detective business, not only because I think it must be very exciting, but because I have a very good reason besides; namely, I want to find my father and clear him of a murder charge that has hung over him for five years. I want to come to work for you so I can learn how to do this. My other folks are all dead and I am free and clear to go to work. I have fifty dollars from the sale of a cow and I will take the train on Wednesday and be in your office early Thursday morning. Hoping you can find a place for me, I am, respectfully,

JASPER WHITE.

"Funny bird, eh?" said Johnny. "Kind of pathetic, too. I wonder if he will show up? Lessee—I'm dinged! It's Thursday now! The mail must have been delayed."

"Umph! What will you do with the little hayseed?" asked Mac.

"Hanged if I know; send him back with some good advice, I suppose."

"Might adopt him like you did Bella's kid."

"Not a parallel case. A country boy of seventeen, 'not afraid of anything,' as he so carefully tells us, may be able to brace the big city and get away with it. It has been done, you know," Johnny Lewis laughed.

Further comment was interrupted by the voice of the office girl, Sadie. She had bobbed hair and was hung from top to toe with fringes and tassels.

"Some one to see you, Mr. Lewis; says it's important," and Sadie's business decorum was quite lost by her giggles as she ushered into the room our young friend Jasper White.

Now Jasper was a decided hick in Sadie's estimation; his clothes were not "peppy," as she would have said, and the bag he carried was of a most ancient vintage. But there was a something about his broad shoulders, the manly gait of him and the fine straight glance of his dark eyes that had commanded even her loftiness to the extent of recognizing his right to an audience with the sub-chief.

"Mr. Lewis? I am Jasper White, from Rocky Gorge. Did you get the letter I wrote two days ago?"

"Jasper White, eh?" Johnny's clear gaze measured him keenly before he held out his hand, but when he did it was done most heartily, and two sinewy hands clasped in a strong grip.

"Well, son, don't you think you were just a little quick in your decision about becoming a detective? It takes very special gifts and severe training to attain that end."

"I suppose you think me terribly cheeky, sir, but you see, I have very special reasons for wanting to learn your profession."

"All boys go through a stage when they think they are fairly cut out for sleuthdom, but it's like measles or the voice changing; you get over it and forget it."

"Excuse me, sir, but I said mine was a special case, and—and——" the boy faltered for a moment. "It is even more special since I wrote to you."

"What do you mean?"

"What I tell you must be a dead secret; is it a go?"

Johnny Lewis smiled indulgently at the boy's idea of his own importance, but he was a great hand at following blind trails—one never knew where they might lead—so he nodded his head sagely and blew a great cloud of smoke to hide the kind if amused twinkle of his eyes.

"Fire away, son. I'll be as silent as the grave until you tell me to talk or act, as the case may be."

The boy twisted his cap, then he came a little closer and said in a low tone:

"May I talk to you all by ourselves? I won't take long, Mr. Lewis."

Johnny really had some office details waiting for him, but he had a strong impulse to humor the boy, so he bade Mac and Sadie leave them. Mac grinned and Sadie shook all her many tassels and tossed her sleek head; but they both knew when to obey quickly and silently.

As the door closed, Johnny turned and said almost curtly:

"Now, young fellow, what the deuce is all this rubbish about?"

"Would you call it rubbish if I could give you the clue to a gang of counterfeiters? No dollar-bill boys, either, but slick, phony big ones that have been accepted by banks."

"Ike Morris and his gang, do you mean?" Johnny's voice had slowed to a drawl and his eyes were half closed as he asked the question.

"The same." The answer was low and stern.

Now Johnny jumped in his chair.

"But, holy smoke! What can you know about that gang—and you a hick?"

No offense was meant at this reference to his country look and the boy in his intent earnestness had no thought of taking offense. The issue was of all importance to him, that was clear.

"Ike Morris is my father; at least I am pretty sure of it."

"Do you know where he is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where? Thunder! Where?"

"I can't tell you unless you agree to help me clear him from the charge that has been hanging over him for five years. That is what I have come to the city to do, sir. I must! I suppose it sounds crazy to you, but I have never had one minute's peace since it happened. I was only a kid of twelve, but he woke me one night and told me to harness up quick and drive him over the mountains to a station twenty miles away. He said the officers were after him, and told me it looked mighty bad for him, but he swore he didn't do it and I believed him. Ever since, once or twice a year, he lets me know where he is and what name he is going by."

"But what kind of a boy are you to come here in cold blood and give him away?"

"I ain't givin' him away; I ain't told you yet, have I?"

"No-no," the detective muttered, realizing all at once that he had bitten well at the boy's story and must go cautiously or he might get the smaller end of it after all, providing there really was anything in it.

They gazed into each other's eyes for a long moment, the boy's as clear and unflinching as crystal and with a power of concentration that made Lewis think of the picture of some great man that he could not place. But it was a look that fairly got him, as he expressed it to himself.

"Say, kid, what's the big idea?" he asked. "You want to clear him from a murder charge, you say, but you would give him away about his other nefarious doings?"

"Making phony money isn't honest, and I hate to think he could do it, but he might live that down in time. The other crime — to know your own mother was butchered is enough to remember, but I just can't believe my dad did the job. God, man! It was done with an axe! And I was only a small boy. We've been a bad lot, but I can't believe that!"

"Not a pleasant thing to remember, I admit."

"How much would you charge to take the case, if *I* had money like the big guns who usually hire you?"

Johnny wondered what this question might mean, so he replied quite soberly:

"Oh, several thousand dollars, of course, with, say, two thousand for a retainer."

"Would you take a deed for the farm instead of a retainer?"

"Now, son, look here! This story is just a bit woolly, and I never go into a thing unless I know more about it," growled Johnny.

"You don't want me to tell you any more and take up your time unless you think you can see your way to help me?"

"Do you know the present address of Ike Morris?"

"I do, and I'm goin' there to-night. But I want to go first and see and talk to my father. I *must* do that."

"And warn him against me! Nothing doing."

"But, don't you see, I got to get his whole story told to me like he don't suspect anything before I can know just how you ought to start on the big case—the murder."

"Oh, that's your idea. Well there is something in that. Now, suppose you go see him to-night and then come in here again in the morning and we'll see about it."

"Then there is a chance for me?" The tone was terribly wistful and the boy's big eyes were pleading.

"Perhaps. We'll see to-morrow. By the way, where do you stop to-night?"

"I thought I would go to the Mills Hotel—I've read about it in the papers, and it's cheap. I must make my money go as far as I can, you know."

"Don't go there. I can steer you to a better place that will not cost any more." Johnny scribbled on a card and handed it to him. "Go there and they will give you a decent room."

"Thank you, sir. You do understand, don't you, about how I feel? My dad and I can live down some things, but no one could live down that—that axe thing, now, could they?"

"My lad, there are some almighty tough spots in this gray old world, but if you have the grit in you that I think you have—well, you can live down anything in time."

CHAPTER THREE

DELICACY of feeling seldom enters into the detective game, but Johnny had a mean sense of sneaking when he gave orders to have Jasper shadowed and followed carefully on his important visit of the evening. In fact, in half an hour he recalled his man and decided to do the shadowing himself; there might be a time for quick, snap judgment, for this gang he had in mind were composed of some very desperate characters. Above all he did not want any harm to befall the boy. His high aim and courage somehow had touched a responsive chord in Detective Lewis's nature.

So about six that evening a bewhiskered, thick-set man of apparently sixty might have been seen entering a restaurant on Eighth avenue just behind Jasper White. The latter, after a furtive look around the room, went with a swift and eager step to a table far in the back where a tall, thin man was already seated. The two shook hands nervously and seated themselves opposite each other.

They were both noticeably pale and for several moments did not try to talk, save to select a frugal meal from the greasy bill of fare handed to them by a large, flat-footed waiter.

Johnny Lewis, in his panoply of whiskers, slid into a chair at the next table and seemed to be quite puzzled as to the relative attractions of corn-beef hash or ham and.

Presently the tall man with Jasper, who looked like the last stage of a T. B. case, spoke in a low voice:

"Jasper, I never would have known you."

"Grown quite a lot, haven't I?" Jasper grinned.

"Yes, you're big and strong, and you look you look so—fit for anything! Why, you look awfully strong!" He ended his speech lamely as if the impression was one that he could not find the right words for, but a growing gleam of surprise and pride showed in the sunken eyes.

"Yep, I'm strong, all right. I can lift more and run faster than any fellow in our county," replied the boy with a show of boyish satisfaction.

"So the old woman is dead?"

"Yep; she lasted a long spell after sh. got sick."

"Did she say anything special before she—went?"

Jasper eyed him grimly before he answered:

"Nothin' much."

"She might have, but I suppose the end came sudden, after all; it often does."

"She did say some things, but I did not get the drift just, but maybe when you tell me what you promised I can understand better what she was gettin' at."

"Maybe so. Have another piece of pie?"

"No, sir. I want that story too much to wait for anything more; will we talk here?"

"Heavens, no, boy! We'll take a stroll up on Riverside and find a nice, quiet spot; it is a good safe plan any time, my boy, if you have anything serious to say, to be careful there are no more dangerous witnesses than a few trees."

"I'll remember that, sir."

The tall man paid their modest check and they left the place.

Johnny heard this remark and smiled to himself, for he well knew Ike Morris to be a suspicious crook, so he took the precaution of a taxi instead of running the risk of arousing suspicion by getting on the same street car.

It was a damp and foggy night and the man known as Morris coughed rackingly several times, but insisted on going to the place

he had in mind with all the obstinacy of a sick man.

Arrived there, he chose a seat quite in the open, but Lewis followed as close as he dared and crouched in a clump of bushes, making himself as small as he very well could in his bulky garments.

The boy's eager questions could be readily heard, but the man's answers were so low that Johnny had to put a sharp curb on his impatience and could only catch a word here and there.

He gathered enough to know, however, that the man was saying his gang had made a big clean-up, and were planning a getaway to Africa, where he meant to make a clean start, and that he was urging Jasper to go with him.

But the boy objected. He seemed to have only one idea and that was "to face the music," as he said. Johnny could not hear enough to quite get it straight, whether the man was talking of the phony money issue, or of the more serious one of the murder case. It was terribly trying to be crawling over the wet grass on all fours and yet only to be able to catch a word or two here and there.

Presently it began to rain and the two got up and started for the stairway to the Drive.

Johnny waited until they were a few yards away, then stood up and shook himself with a shiver and was about to follow when a low voice in his ear said in a husky whisper:

"Not so fast! There's more than one can play at that game, cul. Put 'em up! I don't just like the look of them whiskers, see!"

The attack was so utterly sudden that there was but one thing to do, especially as the hoarse words were accompanied by the movement of a gag in his mouth. Before he could say a word or even think coherently strong arms pinned him and he was securely tied to a tree.

"A nice position for a crack detective to be taken off his guard and trussed up like a pig for slaughter," he thought. His next idea was to wonder if his life would pay the forfeit for his incaution in going alone.

Of course, it being a stormy night, the policemen on the beat would not go far exploring the dark corners of the park, and the footpad, or whatever he was, rifled his pockets in a leisurely manner that was maddening. A well-aimed kick only made the situation worse, for his assailant proceeded to tie up his legs as well as his arms.

But the ruffian put back the money he carried and laughed a dry, guttural crow as he said:

"Your chicken feed wouldn't tempt a sparrow. A few hours to think over your sins may do you good, see, bo? I owed you one, and then, just now, I'm a sort of bodyguard to pertect our star man, the gent you been spottin'. Now think it out."

And Johnny Lewis was left alone with many unpleasant things to ponder upon.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN hour later a slim figure came running down into the park like a deer, not knowing or caring that the rain was the only protection he had from being arrested as a suspicious character. Running at such a gait on a dark night surely betokened some unusual reason, but our friend Jasper knew as little as he cared about what people would take casually.

He raced lightly, but watchfully, to the section where he had sat so quietly before and soon spied that one of the trees presented a very peculiar contour.

Going straight to it, he whipped out his knife and made short work of freeing Detective Lewis, very much out of breath and minus all of his dignity.

As he was freed from gags and ropes he sputtered a word or two that we will omit, then pulling the whiskers from his face, he tried to give a poor imitation of his usual jolly grin.

"Gosh! It *is* you, isn't it?" exclaimed Jasper.

"Yes, and rather the worse for wear, my son. But how in the name of all that is holy did you happen to come back here just at this most opportune time?"

"I heard the dago tell dad how he had fixed you, and I couldn't stand for that," Jasper replied.

"Some boy, if you should ask me!" snorted Johnny.

"Well, you seem a square guy, and you got a rotten deal, that's all."

"Well, boy, I rather think we'll have to do a little business together after all, just for helping me out of this. Did you get the story from your dad?"

"Mr. Lewis, never mind the rain; would you sit down here just a minute? I'm in the worst puzzle any boy could be, I think. It's hell, it's hell, it's hell, that's what it is!" and it is not to Jasper's discredit that he sat down on the wet bench and gave way to great convulsive sobs.

Johnny stood by for a few minutes, saying nothing, but feeling through his pockets for a cigarette — it seemed the only panacea at such a crisis, for clearly the boy had undergone some unlooked-for shock.

"Well," drawled Johnny—that was his way of being natural and sympathetic, "now that you have added some more moisture to this very damp night, suppose we move on. There, my boy, one needn't be ashamed of a few honest tears. I'd a-cried myself an hour ago, but I couldn't reach my handkie. Never mind, it's a hard world, at times. But to-morrow the old sun will be on the job and we'll forget all about this night's work."

"I'll never forget this night as long as I live."

"I think I'll sort of keep it in mind a bit myself," said Lewis somewhat ruefully.

"What time is it, I wonder?"

Lewis put his hand in his pocket and drew out his radium-faced watch. Jasper looked in amazement at the illuminated dial and for a second he was all boy as he exclaimed:

"Oh, let me see; I never glimpsed one of them before. 'Most twelve, is it?"

"Do you like it?"

"It sure is a beaut!"

"Would you like to own one?"

"I think a watch like that would be about the best little pal a fellow could have, specially on a dark night."

"Well, you did me a mighty good turn to-night, Jasper and as a very small return you shall have this watch. To-morrow morning I will have your name and the date engraved on the case so you can keep it as a souvenir of your first night in the big city."

"That would be just too fine for anything!" But in a second the shadows fell again over his strong young face. "But, sir, when you know all I heard to-night you won't want to do that; it's — it's a good deal worse than I thought! He—dad—— I don't know what to say or do."

"What is worse?" Johnny's tone was unwontedly gentle.

"This business about my father. Say, gimme a cigarette; I ain't much of a smoker, but I can't seem to think! You see, he told me the whole story clean. He didn't say a thing about my knowing you and somehow it seems an awful dirty job to give your own father away to the cops. That's what it would mean, wouldn't it?"

"About that." Johnny hated to have to say it and he could see that a mighty soul struggle was taking place in the boy.

"And dad is an awful sick man, too; anybody can see that."

Jasper took a couple of turns up and down the wet walk, then he seemed to come to some decision, for he straightened his shoulders, pulled off his wet cap, ran his fingers through his thick crop of dark hair and said in a gruff voice:

"See here, Mr. Lewis. I'm a White—Jasper White, one of the family who are known as the Killers of Rocky Gorge, and I can't change my blood. But I can and will live it down some day. Just now I'm goin' to show you the whole works of the phony money gang. We'll go there right now. But the other thing I spoke to you about—well, I'm through with that, that's all!" He gulped, but his young face was stern and set.

Lewis scarcely knew what to make of the lad; but, after all, the capture of the counterfeiters was paramount in his mind and the issue of a long-forgotten murder could wait, so he jumped up with alacrity.

"Right you are, son! Let's go!"

"How do you get to East 80th street the quickest?"

"We'll just mosey up to Broadway, get a taxi, stop for a good hot cup of coffee and then — wherever you say. You are the captain on this jaunt." Johnny tried to get back his usual light and jolly manner.

"Couldn't we walk it?" The taxi loomed a terrible extravagance to young Jasper's mind.

"Not on your life on such a night; and maybe we might find that it is important to get there quickly."

After the coffee was ordered, Johnny went to the phone, called up headquarters and requested that two of the best men should be sent at once to where they were, to follow them and be on hand in case he made the haul he expected.

Jasper had been keen enough to get a most careful description of the place they were bound for and he explained it fully to Detective Johnny Lewis on their ride across the city.

So it was an easy thing for them to find their way through the basement of a large apartment house to the engineer's room in the back part of the building; it was snug and warm just back of the furnace and filled with all sorts of tools and litter.

A better place for the purpose could not have been conceived. An engineer in those days is a small czar, who none dared interfere with, and the working of almost any kind of machine could be excused as part of the paraphernalia of the house.

Here were seated three men—the tall man they had trailed as Jasper's father (parenthetically, Johnny didn't half believe he really was), the engineer and a rough-looking fellow, who by his lowering face and wet coat, Johnny supposed to be the one who had so ignominiously trussed him up earlier in the events of that eventful night.

As they entered the door of the basement, Johnny gave a signal with his right hand that Jasper did not see, and two blue-coats followed close at their heels.

A rough-and-tumble scrimmage followed, but it was no use; they were caught dead to rights, and in ten minutes' time the men and the complete outfit were on their way to the station.

There was one small interruption, however. Although Jasper had led them there knowing full well what it meant, when he saw one of the blue-coats handling the man known as Ike Morris roughly, for a moment he forgot his grim resolve to do the right thing. He sprang in front of the thin man, who was caught in a paroxysm of coughing, just in time to catch him as he fell, a red stream gushing from his mouth.

He was dead in a second—the last of the Whites of Rocky Gorge to rejoice in the name of the long line of killers of that region.

When all had been done that was necessary, Johnny and Jasper passed out into the wet night.

Jasper stopped under an arc-light, his eyes blazing and his face as white as alabaster.

"Mr. Lewis, I want you to know the truth now, so you will understand. He—he was a killer, too; he told me so himself. And now I've—I've got to live it down—to live it all down, somehow."

Johnny put out his hand and gripped that of the boy.

"You'll do it, son, you'll do it!" he said. "And I'll help you!"

OSTRICH TREES LOOK LIKE MAMMOTH BIRDS

FORESTRY associations in the East have developed the habit of touring the national parks and national forests of the West, and are bringing back many interesting feature pictures, as well as technical data. Among the photographs in *New York Forestry* is the ostrich tree of Monterey, Cal., a very peculiar looking one.

As a matter of fact, it would be quite as easy and far more correct to say trees in this case, for the celebrated Ostrich Tree of California is really two trees—coast cypresses, which wind and weather have interlaced so that their foliage seems almost one, it is so puzzling to the eye.

These California ostrich trees are vanguards of a grove of picturesque, stormbeaten cypresses not so very far from the City of Monterey.

All aside from the freak pair, which resembled a huge ostrich stalking alongshore, they would well repay any tree lover's visiting.

Strange New England Tribe

THE oldest people in Massachusetts, or, for that matter it might be said, in this country, are the Jackots, of Boxboard City, near Taunton, a people whose chief peculiarities are their albinism, the result of many years of interbreeding, their moral laxity, and their mania for "swapping," a mania that has resulted in many strange episodes that have come to our notice.

One of the strangest of these resulted not so long ago in a more stringent supervision of the practices of the tribe being effected when it was brought to the attention of the state officers. This was the swapping by one of the Jackot patriarchs of his wife for a horse.

A very strange proceeding, you will say.

This patriarch, who had so indulged his passion for trading that he had nothing left to barter but the clothes on his back and his wretched hovel, made the exchange with a brother, handing over his wife for a horse worth about $10. Within twelve hours he had traded the horse for another horse. Meanwhile the brother had taken the wife to Taunton and announced that he was perfectly willing to swap her for anything of equal value.

At this point, however, the state officers stepped in. The brother's announcement had reached their ears and they took both him and the woman into custody. Then the husband was located and informed that he would have to take back his wife and return the horse. He protested that the exchange was made in good faith and in accordance with the usual customs of his people, but his protests were of no avail, and he reluctantly did as he was ordered.

Another instance of the Jackots' mania for swapping was when one of the tribe, just released from the state farm, made his way to the grocery store of a man named Wilson, near the colony. The released Jackot had only his swapping instinct and his clothes and a desire to purchase something. While Wilson went into another room to draw molasses for a customer the Jackot entered into a barter with some of his former associates who happened to be present, and when the astonished proprietor returned he had sold for $2.40 every stitch of his clothing and stood a leafless Adam in the center of the floor. Wilson expostulated, but the trouserless, jacketless Jackot was unperturbed. He demanded a barrel, "allowing" that with a barrel as covering and his $2.40 tightly clutched in his teeth he could make his way back to his kinsmen. The barrel was freely given, and the last the grocer saw of the Jackot he was making his way toward Boxboard City, waddling along with a sort of rotary motion inside the barrel to the astonishment of every passerby and an immense amount of jeering from the junior element that saw him.

The Jackots do not have much traffic with the world outside their little kingdom, except when it comes to horse swapping or bartering of some sort. When a stranger appears in their village most of the adults take to the shelter of their cabins.

The children are a bit more friendly or curious, and the visitor has an opportunity to inspect their albinism—their chalk-like skin and hair and their pink eyes.

The Jackots are a shiftless lot and their standards of morality are not of the highest.

There was a time when mothers and fathers, grown sons and daughters and whole broods of small children lived together promiscuously. Marriage licenses were practically an unknown quantity and the tracing of genealogies would have been next to impossible.

The history of the Jackots dates back as far as the war for independence, when a Frenchman named Jackot settled at Freetown, Mass., with his large family.

MISS LETHRIDGE, the CAT

by O.W. Simons

Fanciful and grotesque stories of purely the imaginative kind are sometimes intensely interesting. "Miss Lethridge, the Cat" makes no pretension of a scientific basis; it was merely a peculiar idea, developed into story form to amuse its author, but possesses sufficient fiction merit to warrant its publication.

—*The Editor.*

AT the time of Professor Lethridge's death the only living thing found about the place was a cat, a big gray-and-white cat. She was sitting on the table beside the sprawled body when neighbors entered the old surgeon's study. It was through the delivery of a package of books that the sad event was discovered. A neighboring physician pronounced it a case of heart failure, the end probably having come the night before, as a lamp was found burning on a bookcase at his back.

The professor had led the life of a recluse. For weeks at a time no one saw him. There had been quite a little feeling because of his practice of vivisection. More than one could attest to the cries and howls of suffering victims that had issued dismally from the ramshackle residence and numerous protests had been made to the old man about it.

"In the cause of science," he would say, looking grimly through his round, horn-rimmed eye-glasses. Many were the relics to prove the untimely ending of cats, dogs, chickens, frogs and other easily obtainable victims, which were found about the place when it was gone over at the time of his death.

Why the lone cat had been spared was not at once apparent, though some light was thrown on the matter when a technical article upon which he was at work at the time of his departure from this life which lay on the table in front of the body made brief reference to an experiment. There was only a beginning, but the old surgeon was evidently highly elated at the result of an operation of some sort which had been practiced upon the green-eyed tabby.

Among those who visited the house were two brothers distantly related to Professor Lethridge, Joel and Hiram Druolard. When these two entered the room with the neighbors the cat bounded from the table to Hiram's shoulder, where she balanced herself with a sort of half-purring cry.

Hiram was certainly startled by this sudden show of friendship, but he did not resent the familiarity, in fact carried the animal along when the brothers returned to their home that evening.

"You're planning to keep her, eh?" Joel commented.

"I've sort of taken a fancy to her," Hiram replied.

"Seems to be mutual. I never cared for cats. Give me a dog every time. They're more friendly."

"I'll admit that, too, but somehow this critter has taken my fancy. You won't mind her around the house?"

"Why, I'm not that set against it, but I reckon you'll tire of it before long."

But Hiram didn't tire of it. Quite the reverse, for they became fast friends, much more so than the companionship that usually exists between a man and his pet. He named her Miss Lethridge in memory of his departed second cousin and the cat answered unfailingly to the name.

Almost at once the brothers noticed something out of the ordinary about Miss Lethridge, a very marked degree of intelligence which showed itself in many ways. There was a peculiar scar at the back of her head where no fur grew, and it was Hiram's pet theory that some sort of a trephining operation had been performed relative to the cat's brain by the old surgeon. However that may have been, tabby seemed to understand every spoken word and could be trusted with a note to be delivered anywhere in the village, which was four miles from the farm.

The Druolard place was sadly in need of a woman's care. The two brothers worked the farm in partnership and were quite successful; indeed they were spoken of as wealthy by their neighbors, though there was little sign of luxury about the home. Women were sometimes hired at berry-picking seasons, but in no other way were they employed about the place. It was jokingly referred to as Bachelor's Hall.

But a change was prophesied when Miss Ethel Dayton made her appearance in the district as the newly appointed teacher of School Number 6. Hiram, as a member of the board, had been the one to write and offer the position, and it may have been that there was a degree of personal interest on both sides that influenced the decision. Small wonder it was so far as Hiram was concerned when the girl's attractive looks and manners were taken into consideration. Her pretty dark-brown eyes were of the tender kind that set the masculine heart a-throbbing. A mass of wavy, lustrous brown hair, a fine complexion set off by a refined tint of roses in the cheeks, a graceful, well-rounded figure, all contributed to an irresistible ensemble.

Hiram was not lacking in good looks, either. More than one of the local maids had cast longing glances in his direction, though his heart had remained intact through the ordeal. His well-knit figure and modest reserve, his quiet consideration for others, had made him popular with the mothers and fathers also.

Joel might have gotten along better but for his fiery temper. From childhood up he had been given to fits of rage that had at times a violence almost insane and only the control and tactful judgment of his younger brother could bring him back to his senses.

Pussy found plenty of employment for her talent nowadays. Many a note she carried in her devious ways from Hiram to Ethel, or returned with an answering missive.

And so she arrived late one November day at Squire Tuppin's, where Miss Ethel boarded, and her "Meow" presently brought the young teacher to the door.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Lethridge! Anything for me to-day?" she asked as she bent to stroke the cat.

Puss accepted the caress and then bounded to the path and back again to the porch growling and whining and occasionally spitting with her back arched.

"What is it, puss?" Ethel inquired, amazed at the cat's antics.

The animal ran out on the road and stood there yowling dolefully. When Ethel followed her, she ran along the road, stopping only if Ethel stopped. Knowing of the cat's unnatural intelligence, she allowed herself to be led to a footpath through an overgrown piece of wood.

About half way a brook flowed, murmuring gently. On the nearer bank a man sat, his broad back at once identified as that of Joel's. He was reading a note and had not heard Ethel's approach, clad as her feet were in rubber-soled tennis shoes.

The girl's heart gave a throb. An overpowering conviction that the note was meant

for her, that Miss Lethridge had been intercepted and robbed, came over her. But before she could make up her mind what to say, the cat had clawed its way up Joel's back onto his head, where it must have made itself felt, and then leapt swiftly across the brook to catawaul in the brush on the opposite bank. Joel's fiery temper was in a blaze in a minute.

"Damn your cussed hide!" he yelled, reaching for a stone which he threw violently into the brush. He dropped the note and Ethel stepped forward, determined to prove beyond doubt the truth of her suspicion. Sure enough, there was her name at the head in Hiram's handwriting. As Joel picked up another stone a flash of her white dress caught the corner of his eye and he turned, realizing in an instant that his treacherous act had been discovered. His efforts to control himself were pitiful to see. Lying was not one of his weaknesses.

"It's as you suspect. I took it away from the cat," he said with scowling, downcast eyes.

"Oh, Joel, how could you be so dishonorable?" her righteous indignation hard to control.

"God help me, I'm mad about you!" he gasped, shaken as he was by his rage at the cat's attack and the sudden appearance of the girl whom he secretly adored.

"And what good will it do you to practice such a contemptible trick?"

"Don't—don't say that! I can't stand it. You don't know what I've been through. Hiram is my brother. That's all that saves him. You——" He stopped, overcome by his feelings.

Ethel had never seen him like this. A wave of fear swept over her. What sort of a monster was this man who could secretly work himself into such a state? His body was shaken as with the palsy.

"You're not engaged—I have a right——" His voice was harsh and unnatural.

"A right? How dare you say such a thing? A right? A right to read a note addressed to me? I never in my life——" She was beyond words and very near to tears. Only her pride intervened.

"I don't say that, but I have a right to try—to try and win you. I read the note. I know how far——"

"That will do. I do not wish to hear any more." Ethel bent and picked up the note, turning to go, but Joel was at her side in an instant and had seized her arm.

"I beg you not to leave me like this!" he fairly groaned. His face was not pleasant to see.

"How dare you touch me?" She shook her arm free from his hold. "Do you call it manly to annoy me when I am here without protection?"

"Forgive—forgive me. I wouldn't harm you for the world. I am desperate. What will become of me?"

Not far away the cat began its mournful howl again. It seemed to divert Joel's thought. He shook his clenched fists over his head, gave a queer, hoarse cry and set off along the path in the direction the animal's wail would seem to indicate.

Ethel made her way back to her home, where she was forced to rest a while on the porch to overcome her shaken nerves. Reading Hiram's loving epistle helped to steady her and she presently went up to her room.

Meanwhile Joel, having prosecuted a violent and ineffectual search for the cat, returned to the farmhouse, which he found deserted. His head was burning, a berserk desire to smash something raging within him. An axe, standing by the wood-pile, caught his attention. Seizing it, he flew at the stacked wood, which he struck at wildly, scattering it in all directions. When he had worn himself out he finally stopped, looking furtively about to see if any one had observed his mad frenzy. But he was alone. The wood was piled back in order and he entered the house. What would his brother say when he heard from Ethel of the adventure of the note? All sorts of mad schemes raced through his mind. They finally settled on the cat, the immediate cause of his trouble. He determined on its painful destruction. She would come home for her supper and then he would settle the account.

Brooding, and hating not only every one else but himself as well, he sat on the steps glowering at the road, waiting for the return of the cat, which he hoped for, and of his brother, which he dreaded.

It was perhaps two hours before Miss Lethridge, the cat, appeared at the gate, entering

the yard in the smooth, disinterested way of her kind. When she espied Joel, however, her ears went back and her back went up as did also her suddenly bushy tail.

"Here, puss!" Joel called, offering a bowl of milk which he had prepared before he sat down to wait. But the cat was not to be so easily caught. She turned and trotted right out of the yard, heading for a group of barns and outhouses. Joel, with rage beginning to rise again, stalked the animal to a large barn, where she had been wont to enjoy a siesta in the sweet-smelling hay which the sun usually warmed during the day through a dusty, cobwebby window. Here, with an empty grain bag, he finally captured her while she drowsed. With a bundle of stout cord which he had brought along in his pocket he bound her feet tightly together. He then bent his steps in the direction of a rather pretentious, shed-like structure, from which ascended a tall smoke-stack, where an amateur smelting plant had been installed some years before by the father of the present occupants of the farm. The building stood directly on the edge of a cliff, the steep, barren surface of which was one of the sights of the district. The seamed rock, if it slanted at all, tended rather inward than outward. Scarcely a green thing could find a footing on the sheer four hundred feet of its height, though there were many crevices and irregular juttings from its stark surface. It bore the family name, Druolard's Cliff. At its foot the rough ground was strewn with heaped and tumbled masses of rock that had fallen during the ages, as the cold of winter and the heat of summer had worked sections loose here and there.

Joel entered the building with his intended victim. Placing the helpless cat on a rough bench, he went over to a forge, where he began poking the coals together preparatory to starting a fire. What diabolical scheme he had in view did not develop, as the fire was no more than well under way when Hiram looked in at the door. He walked deliberately to the bench and, drawing his knife, cut the cords that bound his pet.

"What's the idea, Joel? You wouldn't hurt the poor thing, I hope," he said calmly.

"Wouldn't I, just? You watch me!" He made a rush at the cat, which scrambled up a post into an open, half-floored loft. Joel followed, muttering incoherently, but when he was up Miss Lethridge, running out on a beam where there was no flooring, sprang onto a shelf in the room below and from that to a large packing box and then out the window.

"There, now she's gone! Come down and we'll go and have our supper," Hiram called as he moved over toward the door. He was used to his brother's tantrums, though he had never known him to deliberately attempt a premeditated cruelty such as was evidently intended toward the cat.

Joel came stumbling down from the loft, still grumbling to himself, and as he approached Hiram turned to walk on. Without warning, the bag that was used in the capture of the cat was thrown over Hiram's head and pulled quickly down, pinning his arms at the elbow. With an equal chance he would have been a match for his brother, perhaps even held an advantage, as he was quicker in his movements, but hampered as he was, not even able to see, Hiram was soon thrown to the earth.

"What's all the row?" he cried, half choked by the dust in the bag.

"Never mind," Joel answered as he forced a rope around Hiram's ankles. When the job was done to his satisfaction he picked up his helpless prisoner and carried him back into the smelter, depositing him on the floor of a small room, the window of which looked out over the cliff to a distant range of hills. It was beginning to grow dark now.

"Come, Joel, be a good fellow and end this nonsense!" he said as calmly and naturally as he could. The fear that his brother's reason was unbalanced, perhaps brought on by unreasoning rage at the cat, crept chillingly to his heart.

Joel's feet shuffled about on the floor. He stopped at the door and said:

"You think you can have any girl you want."

Puzzled at this unexpected sally, Hiram asked:

"Why, you know there is only one I care about. Anything wrong about that?"

"Wrong? No, I didn't say anything about wrong. You're too damn complacent, that's

the trouble. Don't you think I've got any feelings? What do you care about what I may suffer?"

A light began to break. It must be Ethel. Hiram had never suspected for a moment such a possibility. Stray incidents came creeping into his mind.

"Well, it isn't for us to settle if you mean Ethel. She has a right to make her choice. I've never known you to call on her. Go ahead."

"What chance have I had? You monopolize all her time!"

"Why wouldn't I? But this is neither the time nor place to discuss such a subject."

"No, we won't discuss it; you're right." His feet scraped again on the rough floor; the door creaked.

"Hold on!" Hiram urged. "There's nothing gained by trussing me up this way."

"Maybe there is, maybe there isn't. Everything's been going your way. Now I'm going to have my chance. You and that infernal cat! It's got a devil in it! I've watched its shiny, green eyes. It's been working for you from the start. I oughter killed it long ago. Miss Lethridge! Ha! One more of your girls. Gad!"

"Miss Lethridge only did as she was directed. You know she's a marvel. Many's the journey she's made to town for you, too. Look at the money she saved you on that wheat the time she hunted up Joe Logan at Watkin's auction."

"I'd uv lost the money a hundred times over rather than have had her here."

"You said you didn't mind the day I brought her in!"

"I wasn't so wild about having her, and now I hate the sight of the sneaky beast."

"You'll feel different to-morrow. You'll thank me for freeing her. Now, let me out of this dusty bag. A joke's a joke, you know, but——"

"You think I'm joking? Not this time, by thunder! You'll stay put till I'm ready to let you go. I'll get the cat—excuse me—Miss Lethridge, too, Mr. School Commissioner." The door slammed and was locked. It was a powerful door.

"Hey, Joel, wait a bit!" Hiram called, but the footsteps died away in the distance.

Moonlight began to creep in at the window. It was a quiet, lovely night. In spite of the hard treatment he had received, Hiram felt only pity for his brother. The violent nature, stung by jealousy which had been kept carefully guarded till now, may have caused him the deepest suffering, perhaps had affected his mind. He must have watched with morbid eye the cat going and coming with notes and so had grown to include it in his resentment. But what was his plan? Would he call on Ethel this evening, the very evening he, Hiram, had intended to ask her to be his wife? The intercepted note had foreshadowed this intention. Within him the fear grew and grew, fear for Ethel now rather than himself. What might not the unbalanced Joel do? He must manage somehow to escape, to be at her side, to protect her from this unknown danger. He struggled violently with his bonds, but in vain. The hours passed, hellish, fearful hours. The sweat ran down his face. He prayed — prayed and struggled. The first faint rays of dawn penetrated the darkness of the room. He lay on his side, tired with the struggle and lack of sleep. There was nothing to be done.

But suddenly the cord that bound his arms came loose and he was able to struggle out of the bag. It seemed as though his prayer had been answered. His feet were soon freed and he stood up, stretching himself and chafing his cramped limbs. The door proved unyielding. There was no sort of implement in the room that would avail to force it. He felt in his pockets for his jack-knife, but he had carelessly left it on the bench when he freed his pet. The view from the window was equally discouraging. Why the building had been placed so near the edge was a mystery. He looked up, hoping the roof might serve, but that, too, was beyond reach. Aside from the personal misery entailed the freedom from the cord and bag seemed of no avail. The cord! Yes, there was plenty of that, a stout, fine rope capable of bearing a heavy weight, but it was in lengths of possibly eighty or ninety feet. Hiram knotted the sections together and, anchoring one end to the doorknob and also about the sash of the window, he lowered the remainder down the face of the cliff. The scheme was a wild and fool-

hardy one, but Hiram did not allow himself time for speculation on the chances of failure or success. He immediately swung himself out of the window and hand-over-hand crept slowly down the face of the cliff. He was forced to stop occasionally to relieve the swaying and whirling and so three-quarters of the journey was successfully negotiated. But now he made a startling discovery. Somehow the next knot below had worked loose and the remainder of his life-line lay in a sprawling coil a hundred feet below among the jagged stones. To climb up again was beyond his strength; in fact the discovery of his plight had so unnerved him that to hold on at all was a matter of superhuman self-control.

A few feet below, just below the end of his line, a ledge in the cliff offered a precarious perch. It was the only hope and a poor hope at that. Beyond this the rock made its most inward slant. He got his feet on the ledge and sat down, a shivering horror of the depth overcoming him. He shut his eyes and fought the attack, his dripping hands tightly gripped to the rough, seamed stone at his side. Self-control was his only hope. There was a limit, too, to his endurance, but Hiram was gifted with a naturally calm mind and he succeeded finally in regaining his nerve. The ache in his knees from the thought of falling gradually grew less, but he avoided for a while looking down. Nowhere in sight was man or beast. The rock-strewn ground at the foot of the cliff, the more distant uncultivated land thinly clad with hemlock and birch, the purple hills marking the skyline, lay quiet and peaceful in the light of the sun just appearing above the horizon. Never had the world seemed more desirable. He thought of Ethel and assured himself she was safe. To build up imaginary catastrophes now would only rack his nerves just when he needed their help the most. In any event Squire Tuppin and his good wife would be at hand to protect her.

Growing used to the height, Hiram looked about for a possible way to ascend the cliff's face. At great risk he managed to move up a dozen feet aided by the dangling rope and then, finding a better resting place, he stopped to regain his breath. While seated here he was astonished to hear the cry of a cat, his pet, he was certain. Where could she be? Somewhere above and not far away, surely.

"Miss Lethridge!" he called.

A muffled purring meow came from his left and a little after the cat's head was silhouetted against the clear blue of the morning sky. She held something in her mouth. He stood up facing the cliff and stretched out his arm as far as it would reach. The cat used this as a bridge to his shoulder and as she advanced he saw that it was a soiled piece of paper she was carrying, probably a message from Ethel. The cat safely on the ledge at his side, he sat down with joy in his heart to read it, but was puzzled and astonished to find it blank. Besides Ethel would never have sent a soiled piece of wrapping paper such as this was. The cat gave a gentle cry and put its paw on his arm. Could it be possible she had brought the paper to him that he might send a message? What else could it mean? No animal lower than man had ever thought out anything so indicative of reasoning. That quality was confined to the one superior specie. But then Miss Lethridge was not a normal creature by any means. She had proved her uncanny powers in a hundred ways.

Hiram felt in his pockets for a pencil and produced a stub that he had to sharpen with the aid of his teeth, and printed roughly a message telling where he was. This he folded and the cat took it in her mouth and bounded onto his shoulder. When he stood on his feet and stretched forth his arm again she scrambled up it to the ledge above and the last he saw of her was the flirt of her tail.

Hiram now turned his attention to climbing higher. An expert with the aid of the rope would have negotiated the remainder of the distance without doubt or delay. He felt rested but weak from the ordeal and lack of food. He was one of those to whom heights are always a menace and he had that to overcome, too.

When he turned from a careful inspection of the surface as to how he should proceed he had one more surprise. The rope was gone. He was accustomed enough now to the height to look below, but it was not to be accounted for that way. There was only one other conclusion. His brother must have re-

turned and drawn it up. To continue climbing without its aid was beyond his powers. The faithful cat seemed his only remaining hope.

He had settled himself as comfortably as possible to wait when the sound of rending blows from above next attracted his attention. Almost immediately several splintered boards came hurtling by. He wondered what new, crazy notion had entered Joel's brain? There was a pause and then more blows followed by a second shower of wood, after which a stronger, stouter rope with a noose in the end appeared. It hung a little farther out due to some projection higher up, and in his effort to grasp it Hiram lost his balance and toppled forward. Vainly he tried to seize the slightly swaying rope and death, terrible, sudden death on the rocks below seemed certain.

By a Divine providence his leg in the leap forward shot through the noose and the next instant he was whirling head downward supported only by his crooked knee. Almost at once he righted himself, even while he was being drawn up by short jerks. There was plenty for him to do to avoid sharp edges that might sever the rope and to keep himself out of the way of scrapes and bumps by the constant use of hands and feet. The danger was still great enough, as any slip would prove fatal. It was an immense relief, then, when he finally drew himself through a great, ragged aperture in the wall of the smelter to lie exhausted on the floor. A heavy sledge-hammer standing at one side accounted for this convenient means of entrance.

Not waiting for Hiram to recover, Joel pounced on him at once and this time with little or no resistance bound him again hand and foot and, having placed him in a sitting posture with his back to the wall, left the room.

A terrible change had come over Joel's features. The eyes were crossed and staring, the upper lip drawn and trembling so that his poorly preserved teeth were half exposed. Add to this a complexion very nearly the color of clay and you have an ensemble not pleasing to behold.

"Joel, Joel!" Hiram cried. "What in heaven's name has come over you?"

From the big room beyond peal after peal of demoniacal laughter, high and interrupted by choking, was the only answer. Then, with a square section of tin held at opposite edges by his two hands and on which were heaped glowing, live coals, the poor benighted creature stood once more in the room.

His intention was indicated when he said: "Your good looks——" That was as far as he got.

Miss Lethridge crept silently, stealthily through the doorway, her whole pose on the alert. Swiftly she leapt to Joel's shoulder, her claws, sweeping his wild, staring eyes. With a cry of pain he dropped his fiery tray and clutched at the cat, stumbling as he did so over the snarl of rope. He had almost succeeded in righting himself when one foot caught again and this time he came down directly on the floor's edge where the partition had been torn away. It seemed an age he hung in the balance and then, with wildly waving legs, man and cat disappeared from view.

This last scene was too much for the exhausted Hiram and he sank fainting in a crumpled heap.

The coals, falling on the loose coils of rope, started a blaze and it was thus the rescuers found the place. Miss Lethridge had delivered her note with her usual faithfulness and had then returned to give up her life for the master she loved.

Ethel, among the first to enter, threw herself on her knees beside her lover and raised his head in her arms.

Meanwhile others were beating out the fire.

"Some one cut these cords," Ethel begged.

As it was being done by eager hands, Hiram returned to consciousness to look up into the sweet face of her whose love and comfort he was so deeply in need.

Things Some People Swallow

APART from such people as professional sword-swallowers and those who give public exhibitions of eating broken glass, china, coke and sawdust, ordinary persons from time to time, either as the result of accident or mad freak, swallow the most curious and unnatural substances.

An exceedingly skillful operation was performed on a lad who had accidentally swallowed a fish-hook, a small leaden plummet being let down the windpipe in such a manner that the point of the hook was forced into the soft lead and the article drawn up.

There was only a few years back the case of a man who, in giving an exhibition of conjuring among his friends in a public house, undertook to swallow a billiard-ball, but who, unfortunately, choked himself through the ball in reality dropping into his throat.

Still more extraordinary was the feat of a lunatic who swallowed a silver watch without experiencing any evil effects. The case was at the time published by an eminent French doctor, and reproduced in the Medical Press and Circular. It appears that the lunatic's wife, being permitted to visit the asylum, produced her watch to assure her husband that the time for her departure had arrived; but as soon as the patient saw the watch he seized it, tore the chain from it and, without much difficulty, swallowed it. The article was described as about two and one-half inches in diameter and half an inch in thickness.

Even still more singular was the case of a young bartender, only recently, who was found dead. The postmortem showed that death had resulted from several false teeth attached to a plate becoming embedded in the heart. It was known he had swallowed the teeth, but apparently fearing no very serious results, he had allowed the matter to take its course, which it did in the way described, the missing article by some extraordinary accident gradually worked its way into the heart.

People have swallowed small articles and been reminded of the fact years afterward by such things as pins, needles, tin tacks, etc., coming out of different parts of their anatomy from time to time. That swallowed articles do sometimes remain in the body for years, and travel all over the system seems beyond doubt from the numerous cases that have come to light. As an instance, there was a most remarkable case some time back, of a hairpin being taken out of a girl's knee during an operation that had to be performed upon her. It was thought that she must have accidentally swallowed it when a child, and it had slowly worked its way out in this fashion.

People occasionally swallow live things by accident; and such animals as small frogs, toads and lizards have been disposed of in this way. But perhaps nothing more extraordinary in its result has ever occurred than the case of a man from whose stomach a live snail had to be cut. This case attracted considerable attention at the time and the only way to satisfactorily account for the presence of such strange intruder was in supposing that he had swallowed it with a draught of water and that it had grown and lived comfortably in its new quarters till its presence made itself no longer tolerable. A swelling the size of an orange was cut open and, to the astonishment of the surgeon no less than the patient himself, a large white snail, alive, was found in the midst.

After the operation the snail was claimed by the patient as his own, preserved in spirits, and placed on exhibition to help defray his doctor's expenses.

Every one is familiar with the unpleasant sensation produced by swallowing things the "wrong way." Very many such mishaps have resulted fatally, and quite recently a little child was choked by this means while taking a dose of castor oil, which the coroner stated had gone the "wrong way" and produced suffocation.

The TOKEN OF FIRE

by Bayard Yadon

"YOU mean there is no hope for him now?" Doctor Kennedy asked gravely.

"None whatever," the attorney answered. "I have done all that can be done, it seems to me. The case was a plain one of murder from the start. Have you heard the details of the crime?"

"Only a bare outline which I gathered from the newspapers. As you know, I have been absent for almost a year. I was in Cuba when I read a brief account of the affair. As young Irwin is a particular friend of mine I am very much interested in the case. Would you mind going over the facts of the case?"

Attorney Lotspeich, the celebrated criminal lawyer, thought for a moment, then gave the information desired:

"It was exactly one month ago to-day. Walter Irwin was visiting at the summer home of his fiancée, Blanche Ostermeyer. The couple was sitting on the front porch. Members of the family inside the house heard them quarreling. A sudden storm arose and the noise of the wind, rain and thunder drowned out the voices of the lovers."

"You say there was a storm?" the doctor interrupted, almost eagerly.

"A devil of a storm—loud peals of thunder and bright flashes of lightning continued without interruption for several minutes. After the storm had subsided Miss Ostermeyer was found dead. Irwin had disappeared. She had finger-marks around her throat and there was no doubt that her lover had murdered her. He was arrested in town the same day."

"Did he confess to killing her?" A troubled look was in the eyes of the physician.

"He did immediately after the arrest. At the autopsy the marks on her throat were examined. They were slight and if Irwin had not confessed to the killing it is probable that he would have been acquitted.

"At the trial it seemed that he was overcome by remorse, as he did nothing to help me in his defense."

"What plea did you offer?"

"None. I wanted to put up the plea of insanity, but he would not consent to it. The trial lasted only two hours and the jury decided on a verdict within three minutes after leaving the court-room. Local citizens say that it is the speediest bit of justice on record. Just think! One month ago to-day young Irwin was an innocent man—the day after to-morrow he is to die in the electric chair."

Doctor Kennedy was silent for at least three minutes. He was visibly affected by the narrative. He seemed to have grown older during the past ten minutes. His gray head was

bowed while his long, thin fingers beat a restless tattoo on the arm of the chair.

They were in the private office of Attorney Lotspeich. It was to this sanctum that the doctor had hurried after hearing of his young friend's predicament. The noted criminal lawyer shifted his body uneasily in his chair and waited for the older man to speak. Being a lawyer he was always expecting the unexpected. He seemed to feel that he was on the brink of a discovery.

When at last the doctor spoke it was in these words:

"If I had been here in time I could have saved Walter Irwin's life!"

Lotspeich was startled and slightly annoyed.

"Please explain yourself," he said quietly.

"I will do so fully," said Doctor Kennedy. "I've known Walter since the date of his birth. What I am about to tell you may seen strange, but it is true nevertheless." He paused. The attorney was now gravely interested, all trace of annoyance having disappeared.

"On the thirteenth of this month," narrated Kennedy, "that will be the day after to-morrow—the very day Walter is doomed to die—it will be twenty-three years since I attended his birth. I will always remember the night. There was a terrible storm, just such a storm as you described as taking place when the crime was committed. There had been many such storms that summer. Mrs. Irwin was ever very nervous during thunder storms. She was literally scared to death on this night, as she died soon after the child was born. It is not at all strange that the child should be affected in a similar manner by storms. But Walter was an exceptional case. He would always become a raving maniac at the sound of thunder and the flash of lightning.

"This peculiarity has led him into much trouble. On several occasions he has had fights while a storm was in progress. Singularly enough, he has ever been ashamed of this weakness and has never used it as a defense. Also, it has caused him to spend much of his time in solitude. I can't imagine why he did not flee from Miss Ostermeyer at the approach of the storm. Cursed by lightning from birth, he seemed to scatter the blight on his intimate friends. His only course of safety was to flee at the faintest sounds of thunder.

"I will not go more into details. You understand the peculiarity of his temperament. Of course he did not murder his sweetheart. He is as guiltless as you or I. The question is: How can we help him now?"

The lawyer rose from his chair and thoughtfully paced the room.

"I understand it all now," he said. "I knew he was holding something back, but I could not imagine what it was. It is as you say. If you had testified at the trial with this story that you have just told me, Irwin would have been acquitted."

"What can we do to prevent the execution?" the doctor asked.

"The governor is our only chance and he has refused to do anything to lengthen the man's life. He may not believe this story. There are so many eleventh-hour stories concocted to gain reprieves that the chief executives rarely pay any attention to them any more. However, we will try."

"But we must stop this!" the doctor cried indignantly. "I have a little plan that might work. Be here to-morrow and report what success you have had with the governor. I will be here also at this hour. Perhaps the two of us can do something. We can at least make an honest effort."

The twelfth stroke of the great prison clock died away into silence. The condemned man paced his narrow cell and realized that his last day on earth had begun. He tried hard not to think of his impending fate, but found that his mind would be occupied with nothing else. Why had the fates placed his name on an unlucky card in the great game of Life? Mankind was against him; the elements had conspired to cheat him of a miserable life; the great lightning, the earthly messenger of the Almighty, had put a curse on him that would shortly send him into the great unknown.

He ran frantically up and down the narrow tomb that was to him a hell of torture. He had grown up with a religious training, but who could have faith in a Providence that had set its mark on one made in His image and had made his life a long drawn-out,

nerve-shattering misery and which was to make his death one of humiliation and shame. How could he expect to——

Listen!

What was that low rumbling, that sinister muttering like the curses of fiendish gods at sport? Lurid, scintillating tongues darted through the narrow grating of the one small window in the cell. The rumbling grew into an awful roar; the cell became ablaze with fantastic light. The pale, wasted features of the youth grew demoniacal in expression. He seemed like some fanciful creature of Dante's imagination haunting a torture chamber of the Inferno than a living being of the Christian era.

It seemed that the elements were warring among themselves and having a decisive battle in the celestial Armageddon. Bright tongues of forked flame pierced the sky, while ever and anon gigantic sheets of flame rose and fell like the waves of the ocean. Through it all came the fearful groan of the storm god who was just waking from his slumber. The wind howled and the rain came in a terrific down-pour. Truly it was such a storm as one sees only once in a decade.

Walter Irwin was no longer a man—not even a madman. He was a perfect fury of blasphemy and execration, hurling itself from one end to the other of the narrow cell; now leaping on his cot and making hideous faces where his arch-enemy was sending in the final blasting taunts; now beating his head against the stone wall. The storm raging without was infinitesimal compared to the one raging in the breast of the object condemned by man's laws and the curse of the Almighty.

"Oh, do your worst, ye furies of hell," he screamed in tones that sounded distinctly above the unearthly roar of the storm. "Ye cursed me at birth, ye have cursed me through a miserable life, what can ye do now except send me from this miserable world to one that can be no worse?"

As if in answer to the blasphemous question, a huge bolt of fire pierced the heavens and descended to earth, seeming to light it for miles. The solid stone prison seemed to rock on its foundation and a bursting roar spoke the final shot of heaven's artillery.

This was the end of the storm, within and without.

As if they were in some mysterious way related, the man's nature changed with the cessation of the tumult outside. A strange new sense of quiet seemed to permeate his very being. What was it that was revealed in the fiery bolt from above? Even as the rainbow was a token that the world would no more be destroyed by water, he seemed to see a promise in the "fiery autograph of God" that he would no more be cursed by lightning. But what irony! He would die by electricity within the space of a few hours. No matter. He would no longer be the cringing, chattering imbecile. He would meet the king of terrors like a man. Moreover, a load of guilt seemed to have been lifted from his heart. He no longer had the feelings of a condemned murderer. The idea of his killing his sweetheart! It was preposterous.

With these thoughts he lay on his hard cot and passed into a dilicious state of calmness that he had never enjoyed before.

Miles away from the scene of impending death a roadster was bumping over a muddy, rain-washed country road.

"Do you really think that we can make it, doc?" Mr. Lotspeich asked the question as if he dreaded the answer.

"We can if we have no accidents and the road becomes no worse. But a delay of ten or even five minutes will cause us to be too late."

"How far is it to the capital? Do you happen to know?" the lawyer asked.

"Fifteen miles from this store we are passing now." Doctor Kennedy consulted the luminous dial of his chronometer. "It is exactly three-thirty now. The poor boy will die at four-thirty sharp unless we get there on time." He shuddered as if he could feel the current already passing through his own body.

"Do you think it will do any good to try the telephone again?" the practical lawyer asked.

"None whatever," the doctor answered. "The storm has knocked out the entire telephone system and the line will not be repaired for several hours yet. If we stop to try it

again we will only be wasting time that might save the poor fellow's life."

For several minutes no word was spoken. Then from Doctor Kennedy:

"This engine is acting funny. Something's wrong. Good God, I'll bet we're out of gas!" As he finished speaking the car stopped. Quickly unscrewing the cap of the tank, the doctor looked into the opening by the rays of a flashlight and found his fears confirmed.

The lawyer took command of the situation: "There was a filling station at the store we passed a few minutes ago. We must run back and get some gas." He sprang out of the car and started off on a run. The doctor followed, muttering: "It will be at least ten or fifteen minutes' delay. Oh, God, why has everything gone against us?"

In the gray dawn of the morning there was a solemn procession from the condemned man's cell to the death chamber. The victim, dressed in a thin black suit, carried his head erect and walked with a fearless tread. The members of the death watch looked wonderingly, half fearfully at the young man. Could this calm, manly fellow be the raging, maniacal creature of yesterday? They could scarcely believe it.

The prisoner and the others who were permitted filed into the execution chamber. The chaplain spoke a few words in an undertone to the prisoner and seemed pleased with the answer. The executioner alone appeared to be ill at ease. This was to be his first job of this kind, and he evidently did not find it to his liking.

The prisoner meekly placed his hands and feet in the proper positions and allowed the electrician to adjust the straps. The metal cap was placed on his head and all was ready. The young man's eyes moved to the knife-switch on the wall near the chair. He seemed fascinated by the harmless looking piece of metal that had the power to send him into eternity. Open, as it now stood, it was as harmless as it seemed, but closed——

Slowly and with trembling the hand of the electrician was placed on the handle of the instrument of death. He purposely turned his head so that he could not witness the first effect of the awful deed. The man in the chair closed his eyes.

With a quick movement the switch was thrown into place.

It had remained closed for a minute when the sound of running feet was heard in the corridor outside. The door was thrown violently open and two prison officials rushed into the room.

"Stop!" shouted one of the newcomers, frantically waving a paper. "The man is innocent! Doctor Kennedy has had the body of the dead girl examined. She was killed by lightning and not by strangulation!"

The electrician quickly opened the switch.

"Too late!" he groaned. "Why didn't you get here a minute earlier?"

He quickly took off the fastenings. The young man in the chair *rose to his feet!*

The others staggered back, overcome by surprise not unmixed with fear. Irwin alone was calm.

"I knew I was innocent," he said simply. "Just as I grasped the girl by the throat there was a flash of lightning which shocked me and killed her. I could not remember and thought I had killed her. Last night I suddenly remembered. It came to me in a flash."

One of the prison officials recovered his power of speech.

"How long had the switch been closed when we rushed in?" he asked the electrician.

"For a full minute," was the answer.

"Then why wasn't he killed?"

"I ought to have known," said the electrician, "but I didn't think. When lightning struck the prison last night it must have burned the wires and knocked off the current."

The MAN IN CHANCE STREET

by

Jackson J. Smith

CHAPTER ONE

THE room was lost in the rear of the tottering edifice that was "Windy Dan" McManara's rathskeller, a dive situated in the ugliest part of an ugly district. Barren of ornament save for a beer-slopped table and stool-like chairs, it was insidious with the poison of stale air and uncleanliness. Its lone window was boarded; it was small and dimly lighted.

McManara's place was frequented by those shady gentry whose occupations required more or less seclusion, and the two men who sat, smoked and talked belonged to this coterie. Sam Grear, alias "Sam the Weasel" and "Slippery Sam," was all that his monickers testified. He was a gang-man of the lowest type, wiry-formed and savage-faced. His yellow-flecked eyes were furtive, always shifting, and he was cruel-lipped. His was the blanched physiognomy which told of drugs and a hypodermic needle. The other man, Jim Irion, was tall and muscularly built, with a swagger of body and looseness of expression that marked him also a denizen of the red lands. In the aptitude of crime, however, he was but an amateur.

Besides the room's innate stench it reeked with the smell of Grear's cob-pipe. The imprisoned air was thick with the bad odor. Neither of the men, however, was mindful. Jim Irion preferred a mild Turkish, but he had no aversion to anything the Weasel did. At least he kept his mouth tight. Big and powerful-built as he was, he was but an apprentice; Grear was a past-master.

He flicked the ash from his cigarette and exhaled slowly. The Weasel took the cob from between his colorless lips and regarded the bowl of it narrowly. Presently, without looking up, he spoke:

"They tell me, Irion, that you're intendin' joinin' a click, an' you got your eye on the Winslow avenue organization. I ain't dippy on this rumor stuff, but I heard talk, an' maybe it's so. How 'bout it?"

Irion clenched an enormous, blue-veined fist. He looked at it for quite a spell. He drew forth a handkerchief and wiped his smooth-shaven chin. The question was vital to him and he wanted time to consider.

"I been thinkin' it over," he said presently. "Maybe I am willing, but I don't make no stabs for the nomination first. If it's offered I'll put it in the back o' my head an' wait till it cools off."

The Weasel smiled gratingly.

"Lay off that independent stuff, Irion," he counseled. "You know what Gentleman

Harry says about beggars an' choosers. The Winslows is one o' the best gangs in the country, backed by a bird with enough political pull to drag an elephant. They got specialists in every line, from dips to gentle grafters, an' they don't take off their lids to anybody. They got plenty candidates, but they're lookin' for pure gold. See?"

"What's all this gotta do with me?" Irion interrogated.

Sam Grear put the pipe from his mouth.

"Maybe a lot. I been wonderin' if you'd be willin' to do a fella a good turn by helpin' him turn a trick, an' for a reward get the chance to become a Winslow. Uh course, if you ain't anxious—I can knock at another door."

"What's the job?"

"We ain't come to that yet, Irion." The Weasel was non-committal. "What I want to know is, will you go through with it no matter what it is?"

"Who's the guy I'm to help?"

Grear jerked a yellow-stained finger towards himself.

"Me," he made answer. "I'm the jay. I'm the right-hand man o' the leader o' the Winslows, an' all I gotta do is whisper in his ear an' it's a go. If I say it's all right, it's all right. You oughta make a good peterman, Irion. As a member o' the gang you'll never have to worry about bail or a mouth-piece. An' molls——"

"Lay off the women stuff," Irion interjected roughly. "My brother Steve met up with one of 'em an' you know what happened because of her. I hate 'em an' I don't want nothin' to do with 'em.'

"Oh!" said Grear. He had touched the wrong spot and knew it. Jim Irion's antipathy for women was almost a saga in that section of the underworld in which he moved. So far as he was concerned, women were nil. The grace of a supple form held in it no lure for him. Frank admiration for his powerful-built body and handsome if somewhat coarsened features was certain to bring forth a curse, if betrayed in the glances of any of the gentler sex. Jim Irion was a woman-hater if ever there was one.

Hatred for the opposite sex was not innate with him, for there had been a time when he had turned at sight of a pretty face. The aversion had been instigated by one Rita Hearns, nicknamed "Cutie," "Dearie," and other appellations in line with these.

Rita Hearns was a newcomer to Irion's world, hailing from Chi. She was an audacious frau, tall and blonde. It seemed that from the very beginning she had eyes for none but Steve Irion, Jim's brother. Steve Irion, in turn, had fallen for her almost at first sight. The seemingly mutual infatuation had abruptly ended (Jim Irion's face grew bitter as he thought of it) when Rita, after pleading with Steve to turn a trick so that they could marry, disappeared with the loot. It was almost a deathblow to Steve Irion. The police hot on his trail, he had in turn vanished, both to elude the law and search for Rita Hearns. And it was as though the earth had swallowed him up.

That had been a year ago, but Jim Irion remembered it now as though it had occurred only yesterday. And the reminiscence of it affected his brain as a white-hot iron would a piece of paper. It consumed him. The family attachment, strong within him, had been centered in his younger brother. He had loved Steve, the sort of love that is a passion, that grows sanguinary at the least hurt to its recipient.

He looked at his cigarette and found it had been crushed in the clinch of his sturdy fist. He tossed it away and with the back of his hand wiped his loose-lipped mouth. He leveled his finger. When he spoke his voice contained a tinge of menacing earnestness. His eyelids were narrowed.

"I'll be frank with you," he said. "The reason I want to join your gang is 'cause I'm thinkin' o' findin' my brother some day an' I'll need some help an' money. As you say, the gang can do a lot. Also, I always had a notion that Cutie Hearns didn't play her game alone. There was somebody back o' her that did the directin'. Uh course, I got no proof an' I don't know. It ain't nothin' more'n a hunch. But if I find out there was such a guy an' if ever I meet up with him——"

The Weasel laughed mirthlessly.

"Sure!" he made comment. "If ever you meet up with him you'll kick him for a goal. Glad I ain't him. But to get back—if you'll

help me in this trick I'll fix it so's you can become a Winslow. A Winslow gets perfection, an' you'll need it after you get through with the guy an' jane what gipped your brother."

"I'll do it!" said Irion. "What's the dodge?"

Grear bent forward. His yellow-flecked eyes glimmered.

"The rest o' the gang ain't in on this thing, unnerstand. It's only between me an' you. You know, Irion, that there ain't no love lost between me an' Fancy George Finkle. Finkle is a good con man, but he's too damned smart. There's been a lotta fights between me an' him lately an' the gang is gettin' too small to hol' both of us. Either him or me's gotta git, an' it ain't my intentions to quit jus' yet, not by a long shot. So Fancy George is elected. Unnerstand?"

Irion nodded tersely.

"Now, the thing is that Finkle might not take to the idea," the Weasel continued. "So we gotta fix it so's there ain't no other choice. We gotta make it so strong that he's *forced* to git."

"You mean frame him?"

"Eggs-ac'ly! Now, lissen to the how of it. T'morra the gang is stagin' a play. I ain't in with the spiel, but the ken is mine. You know Jack Cudahy's jewelry dive? Well, some o' the boys are gonna break in there past midnight an' help 'emselves to a ton o' sparklers. Fancy George is supervisin' the trick. There ain't no watchman an' it's like water off a duck's back for 'em."

"Yeah, but how——"

The Weasel chuckled softly. The sound was like the rustling of garments.

"I'm comin' to that. Irion, you know Fancy George yourself. Next to his good-looking phiz, his natty get-up, or the glass on his finger, what's the main thing you'd notice 'bout him?"

Jim Irion ruminated.

"Why, I'd say his cigarette-case."

"Right you are!"

The Weasel grinned sleazily and stuck his lean-fingered hand in his coat pocket. He placed an eye-catching, sterling-silver cigarette-case on the table and watched the maze-ridden face of Jim Irion. Irion's eyes were wide as they stared at the shining object.

"Finkle's!" he exclaimed. "How'd you get it?"

The Weasel laughed again.

"Never mind that. It's Fancy George's all right. Lamp the 'nitials. Now, what I want you to do is to plant this thing in Cudahy's place after they turn the trick. You can stick aroun' an' after they're out slip in an' stow it. It's dead easy. If I didn't have a job to turn t'morra night I'd do it myself. What say, Irion? Will you do it or not?"

"I don't know," Jim said dubiously. "I'd like to join the gang, but the risk ain't to my likin'. I'm not afraid, but if the bulls caught and took me up the river I might never get to see my brother again."

The Weasel took the pipe from between his teeth and knocked the gray ash from its bowl. He pocketed the pipe and leaned back in his chair.

"Risk nothin'!" he said easily. "It's like breakin' open a kid's penny bank. All you gotta do is pass an' drop it in the window or somethin'. Everybody knows this thing belongs to Fancy George an' the cops'll grab him quick. An' I'll tell you, Irion, I'll give you fifty iron men besides. How 'bout it?"

"You're on," declared Jim Irion, rising. He reached for the cigarette-case and slipped it in his pocket. "Don't forget the fifty, whatever you do. See you day after to-morrow!"

CHAPTER TWO

ELEVEN o'clock of the night following Jim Irion wormed his way through the labyrinth of Windy Dan's back-dive and sauntered out into the star-lit, moon-haunted obscurity of near-midnight. There was a cool, almost cold, wind, and the raw air, cutting deep into his nostrils, dispelled the brain-clogging murkiness of the brew he had drunk in the saloon. Irion wiped his lips with the back of his arm, thrust his hands deep in his pockets and pointed his toes in the direction of Jack Cudahy's jewelry store.

The way cut through the very heart of the city's tenderloin. It was a dark, gloomy way —a way of menacing shadows and sinister alleys. Above it the sky stretched clear, a

blue-black canopy studded with a billion diamonds. It was a brisk autumnal night, fitful to a degree for devious intentions and dark deeds.

Some of the streets Irion traversed were not deserted, however. Along these human rats and classily dressed gentlemen, out on a spree, alike jostled his elbows. Tall, hard-eyed men, their hands thrust deep into their pockets and looking very much as he, shouldered and glanced at him passingly. One recognized him and jerked his head in surly greeting. Women flashed past him, decent women, tall ones and short ones and plump, some ascetic-faced and others complacent, all powdered and rouged. Quite a number of them, noticing Irion's athletic build and good-looking countenance, attempted to catch his eye, but Irion scowled.

"Blast 'em!" he muttered. "I know the breed. They'll rush a guy an' then double-cross him for a few bucks. I hate 'em!"

Yet in spite of his momentary ire a subconscious sense of passionate elation was in him. To-night he would commit the deed that would gain him a place in the ranks of the Winslows, and with the power of a country-wide criminal clique backing him up he could go about his work of finding his brother and wreaking vengeance upon Steve's malefactors. His fists tightened in his pockets at the very thought of it; a grim smile came into his face and a certain levity into his step. His brother Steve! If only he was not dead. Steve, with his always-smiling eyes, his boyish face and frank gaze. Steve, who had gone straight until he had met Rita Hearns. Steven ruined, lost and maybe dead—all because of a woman!

The lips of Jim Irion tightened into a bitter line. A thought came to him, he reached in his back-pocket; the sterling cigarette-case was there. With the touch the tingling glow returned to him. He would find Steve and—he would find the woman and her instigator, find them and make them pay.

He quickened his already swift pace. The number of pedestrians about him grew smaller and smaller. He was leaving the cheap gaiety and revelry, the part dotted with burlesque houses and cafés catering to the muck and rack. He was gradually entering a vicinity which neither seethed nor swarmed. Here was silence and a darkness that the neighborhood of Windy Dan's place did not know. Here were houses that were ugly, wooden houses no more than two stories high, domiciles that threatened to totter at a single breath of wind, the sort which thieves and gunmen made their habitat. Here were streets and narrow lanes that exhaled an indelible stench.

Jack Cudahy's jewelry store, owned by a cynic who held little faith in the ability of watchmen or means of protection as employed by detectives, was now not far off. Untiringly Irion hurried on, passing corner lamp-light after lamp-light. Occasionally a shadow in human form flitted past, eyeing him ferociously, for this was the habitation of that genus whose acquaintance with the law was not of excellent standing. Jim Irion, however, was unmindful. He turned into a narrow, almost impenetrably dark thoroughfare called Chance street and continued on his way, passing numerous filthy lanes whose mouths were like gaping holes that betrayed none of the secrets their dank maws might hold.

The blackness about him suggested black thoughts. He thought of Steve's evil-doers, and again his heart grew malevolent within him. If ever he laid hands on them he would crush them like so much paper. Though Irion had no proof that Rita Hearns had had a prompter in her game with Steve, still, somehow, he knew it. A woman would not alone——

"Gee!"

The exclamation jerked from his lips involuntarily as his foot tripped against something and all but sent him sprawling to the muggy pavement. Recovering his balance, Irion turned for a brief moment to stare down at the cause of his misstep. The Cimmerian darkness, however, prevented him from distinguishing anything but a small something that was a dim frescoed shadow against the further blackness of the sidewalk. He continued on his way.

The incident was trivial and his thoughts immediately returned to the person foremost in his thoughts: Steve. Revenge, brotherly affection, hope—these were the emotions that now reoccupied his brain.

Suddenly he stopped. What was it that was gnawing in his subconscious mind, striving to

tell him something? A frown furrowing his brow, Irion reflected.

Dim thought, like the gradual remembrance of a long-forgotten dream, seeped slowly through his brain. Turning sharply, a catch in his breath, Irion retraced his steps to the place where he had tripped but a few minutes before. An odd sensation raced in him. He reached the thing and knelt down quickly. And then his breath lodged in his throat as he realized his suspicions were verified. For the something he had tripped over was the outflung arm of a dead man!

With a slight shudder Irion stiffened. The silence and the darkness about him seemed to tense—to grow oppressive. He stared at the huddled form with blank uncertainty, not knowing what to do. The face of the lifeless man was undistinguishable, a gray smudge with small dark dabs for features. The breath of him was soundless—gone forever.

Something about the open neck of the figure aroused Irion's suspicion. Gingerly he placed a hand to it and drew away something that was a purplish-black in the gloom. He looked at his hand for a time, allowing the dawn of cruel truth to seep into his consciousness. His heart took a spurt. With a quick intaking of his breath he came to his feet awkwardly.

The night suddenly seemed gruesome and ugly. With his unsoiled hand Irion reached in his pocket for a handkerchief. His groping fingers came in contact with something cold and hard-like. The touch somehow startled him. He drew forth the sterling cigarette-case and regarded it absently. Slowly, then, his gaze traveled to his other hand. He pondered.

The night shrouded him like a world-length blanket. The murk about him pushed at him and became more than uncomfortable. The diamonds in the sky seemed to wink down at him angrily. In five short minutes the world had taken on a different hue to Irion.

He stirred suddenly. There was no time to hesitate. It was a crude idea, yet — why not? It did not involve the risk of being caught at stowing the cigarette-case in the jewelry store. It involved a man not guilty of the crime, but that man was a criminal, anyway, who would not hesitate were he in Irion's boots. And there was Steve — Steve and his own vengeance—to be considered.

He gritted his teeth. Quickly he dropped the cigarette-case near the murdered body and, like a wraith, moved on into the night.

CHAPTER THREE

IT was early the next day that Irion met Sam Grear. Their rendezvous was the same as that which had served them when they had plotted to frame Fancy George Finkle, the little bare room somewhere in the rear of Windy Dan McManara's rathskeller. There was no time lost in coming to the point. The Weasel had no cause for subtle innuendoes and Irion's manner was always frank and blunt. Grear seemed nervous. His eagerness was unconcealed. He took out his cob-pipe, lit it, and inquired:

"Well, Irion, everything come out O. K.?"

Irion leaned back in his seat.

"Better than you think. I changed a bit o' the program, but the play was just as good. Sam, Finkle won't be nabbed for breakin' into Cudahy's joint. It'll be for murder!"

The Weasel's yellow-flecked eyes popped.

"Murder! How's 'at?"

"Well, on my way to Cudahy's place last night I went through Chance street. It was dead dark, like always, an' I stumbled over a dead guy. Somebody'd croaked him. So I left the cigarette-case by his side."

An incredulous expression came into the Weasel's face. The whipcords stood out on his forehead with a bulging blueness. His blanched face turned even whiter. The pipe left his parting lips and clattered to the floor.

"You—did—'at?" he demanded hoarsely. "Why—how——"

Irion laughed—a single swift note.

"Sure—that's what. I planted the thing by the dead body. What's the matter?"

"Nothin'," said the Weasel weakly. He stared off unseeingly into space. A weak smile quivered around his blue lips.

Jim Irion frowned.

"What's the matter with you, anyway?" he demanded. "Gettin' het up over a thing like that. Why, the scheme couldn't be better!

When they nab Fancy George Finkle they'll have him dead to rights. 'Where was you last night?' they'll want to know. But a bird what bungled another jay's coop ain't tellin', see? If he does talk, to save his skin on the greater charge, the chances are they won't believe him. If they do they'll have him smack on the housebreakin'. He runs up against a long stretch whichever way he turns."

The Weasel's face seemed to brighten.

"Now that's over, I want my part o' the bargain," Irion said. "An' I'm in a hurry for it, too."

The Weasel leaned across the table. His eyes and the lines about his mouth were sinister.

"As soon as I can do it, Irion," he promised. "But there's somethin' I want to tell you. Remember I said here day before yesterday that the reason I didn't do the job o' plantin' the cigarette-case myself was 'cause I had to turn a trick on that same night?"

"What about it?"

"Nothin' much. Only that job was croakin' the guy you run across on Chance street last night!"

"You mean you're the man who killed——"

"Yeh, I did it." The Weasel passed twitching fingers over his eyes. "He was causin' me a lot o' trouble an' I had to do for him. The reason I'm tellin' it to you—well——" He paused.

Irion pondered.

"Blamed funny, ain't it?" he murmured. "Say, who was he?"

"Never mind that," said Grear nervously. He rose. "See you again, Irion. So long! I'll let you have the fifty soon as possible."

When he was gone Irion thought a while. The Weasel's unneasiness puzzled him. What was wrong? Was Grear's restlessness due to the after effects one experiences upon committing murder? Or was it something else? Possibly it had been caused by the shock of hearing of the weird coincidence. But then it had not perturbed him, Irion, and the coincidence was as strange to him as it was to Grear.

He smoked a cigarette over the singularity of it all, then found his way to the street and thence to the bar-room. Ordering a beverage he drank it slowly, still wondering. As he set down the glass a hand touched him on the shoulder. He turned about.

"Been looking for you," said Lester Herk. Herk was the district plainclothesman.

"What's the matter?" Irion asked gruffly. A vague qualm began gnawing at his heart. "What you want?"

"Nothing much," declared Detective Herk. "Scared you, eh?" He laughed harshly. "Got a guilty conscience or something. You're wanted down at the morgue, Irion. Some guy got bumped off last night and they say you can identify him."

"All right," said Irion. He paid for the drink. "Next time, Herk, unless you got somethin' on me keep your dirty hands off. I don't like the touch of 'em."

CHAPTER FOUR

An hour later Jim Irion left the morgue. Gone now was the looseness from his face, the stoical carelessness that usually enshrouded him. In their place was a dominant firmness, in his eyes an unwholesome glint. His lips appeared lithic. He walked unnaturally straight, with a grim swiftness.

Windy Dan's place seemed to loom out of the dilapidated row as though to meet him. Irion swung the door in and cast a swift appraising glance over the width of the barroom. He stalked over to the bar, leaned against it and rested a foot on the brass rail.

"Seen anythin' o' Sam Grear the last hour, Dan?" he inquired.

Windy Dan, tall and heavy, his Irish countenance healthily florid, turned from wiping a glass.

"No, Jim. Maybe he's up in his room feedin' hisself snow. I say, hear the news? Fancy George Finkle's been pulled in for usin' a gat on an unknown."

Irion jerked his head.

"I know, Dan. I just been to identify this here unknown. If you see anything o' Grear have him wait for me. I got somethin' important to tell him."

He ordered a drink, paid for it even as he gulped it down, and left. He crossed the ugly street, moved along swiftly and after a time

turned into a side thoroughfare that was not meagre with its scum and filth. His destination was not far off; at the end of five minutes he ascended cracked stone steps and rang a bell. An ugly-faced hag peered through the aperture and in a raspingly shrill tone demanded to know what he wanted.

"Grear?" said Irion. "He's here, ain't he?"

The silver-haired head bobbed.

"Yeh, but he tol' me not ter let nobody in ter see 'im."

Irion placed his foot between the door and the side of the doorway.

"I don't care what he said. I'm gonna see him, lady, an' that goes. You don't have to be scared. I ain't no dick."

Relief stared from the ugly face. The door came open and Irion was admitted.

"Second floor back," the woman said. "Yer kin find it yerself."

Irion nodded. The hallway was dark, narrow and musty. It gave off an odor that was pain to Irion's nostrils. He pulled his hat a bit lower, stuck restless-fingered hands in his pockets and started to ascend the stairs. They groaned and creaked protestingly under the heaviness of him.

He found the back room on the second floor and knocked. Silence. He rapped again.

"Who's there?" a tense voice suddenly called.

"Jim Irion."

His straining ears heard the muffled gasp that emanated through the frail, weak-hinged door. The Weasel was evidently not expecting him; or was the gasp an indication of fear?

The voice from within sounded again:

"What you want, Irion?"

"Nothin' much. Want to see you about somethin'."

The door opened slowly. Irion came into the room. It was a small room and dirty. The paper on the wall hung almost in shreds. The window was boarded and the stabs of light that pierced through the cracks were not stable enough to dispel all the gloom.

"What you want?" asked the Weasel again. He backed away towards the opposite wall. His face twitched anxiously.

Irion leaned against the door. His eyes lighted balefully as he caught sight of an opened, partly filled suitcase on the table.

"Where was you goin', Grear? Figurin' on leavin' town?"

Grear said nothing. Irion stirred. He stood like a form in wood.

"Did you ever pray, Grear?"

The Weasel's yellow eyes seemed to flash fire.

"Say, what you tryin' to pull off?" he demanded. "If it's your fifty ——"

He stopped. A glare, then horror flew across his features. He cursed venomously. He drew back and seemed to grow smaller.

Something had leapt into Irion's right hand. It was blue, a poignant blue that glinted dully in the darkness. Its lone eye was sinister and unwavering.

The black air rocked and shivered with Irion's voice:

"Grear, I can see now why they call you the Weasel. I don't know much about that animal, but I know it's somethin' between a rat an' a skunk. It was you who killed the man that I found last night in Chance street. He was gettin' ugly about somethin' an' you had to do it, eh? I know now what that somethin' is: you killed him 'cause he knew too much; you an' Cutie Hearns had framed him. I jus' been over to the morgue, Grear, to identify that man—the man you murdered! I didn't recognize him last night, when I saw him lyin' there, as my brother Steve——"

Then there was a flash and a report, and Irion walked out of the place.

The Dropped Jewel

By KENNETH ANDERSON

CAPTAIN OF DETECTIVES JOHN TALLANT studied over the facts in the case. They were puzzling, even mysteries.

The night before $25,000 worth of diamonds had been removed from a tray in the display windows of one of the largest jewelry establishments in the city. Apparently not a clew had been left.

The shop was located in a well-lighted, vigilantly patrolled district and for years had kept as an advertisement a tray of diamonds in its windows. It had never before been robbed. The interior of the shop was lighted during the night. Its unobstructed plate glass windows permitted a sweeping view within. No glass had been shattered. No lock had been broken. Everything indicated an "inside job."

Only one employee was suspected, Andy Stang, a clerk approaching the thirty-fives. For several weeks previous to the theft, according to his employer, Marcus Veath, a short, heavy but immaculately garbed man, Stang had acted suspiciously. Yet no evidence had been available to warrant his arrest.

Several days passed. Captain Tallant had turned over the case to two of his keenest officers, Detectives Charles Nix and Archie Rohrs. Veath had offered a reward of $5,000 for the return of the diamonds and the arrest of the thief or thieves. But little progress had been made. Several new points, however, had been uncovered, and a secret investigation concerning Stang, the clerk, revealed circumstances which more securely tightened the net of suspicion around him.

Stang was married, had three children, and lived in an upper-story, cramped three-room apartment in the south end of the city. His wife was sickly. These facts had no particular bearing on establishing his guilt. But Stang was in debt, in the relentless grasp of a high-rate loan establishment. It might be seen how a man with a sickly wife, three children, a small salary and a gnawing load of debt could be tempted to steal when the environment of his employment surrounded him with glittering riches. He was kept under close surveillance. It was hoped that he would attempt to sell or pawn the diamonds. But not a trace so far had been obtained of the missing stones.

One important clue secured by Detectives Nix and Rohrs heretofore overlooked was that on the morning after the robbery a diamond had been found on the floor near the window in which had been the tray, dropped, evidently, by the thief. In notifying the police, Veith, thinking this an insignificant detail, made no report of it.

But the clue, instead of clearing the case for the detectives, complicated it. Guilt pointed to Stang as the only possible solution. Yet if Stang had removed the stones from the window, why did he leave this one stone on the floor? Did he overlook it in his haste? Yet nothing indicated haste in the theft.

The case lagged on. The theft, discovered on a Sunday morning by Veath himself when he had opened the store to look over some papers, under Captain Tallant's advice, had been kept a secret. To avert conjecture a new collection of stones, this time lifnites, were placed in the tray. They had the same brilliancy as diamonds. But whereas the stones stolen were valued at $25,000, these were worth only a trifle of that amount.

Then the inevitable happened. Detectives Nix and Rohrs, unable to carry the case further, made a final report. A consultation was held in Captain Tallant's office at which the two detectives and Veath were present. Stang was arrested and held in the city jail for investigation and the newspapers got one of the biggest stories in days.

The "story" broke on the *Ledger's* time, a morning sheet. Paul O'Neil, *Ledger* police reporter, seeing Stang's name on the police records, ascertained that he was a jewelry store clerk in the employ of Veath's and ungorged the story from Captain Tallant.

He obtained permission to visit Stang in his solitary cell. Quickly he secured a "story." Fifteen minutes later he was seated at a typewriter. The diamond theft and the arrest were only a foundation on which to construct one of the richest human-interest stories in months. In swift, bold strokes, with the unornamented prose of newspaper diction, he sketched Stang's circumstances, his small wage, his shabby suit, the squalid apartment, the sick wife, and three children; the loan shark's grasp of him in his desire to buy for them a home in the suburbs, and his plea that his wife and children be cared for during his imprisonment. A strong feature of the story was that the loan office was located in a suite of rooms over the store where he had been employed. The story was on the streets an hour later. The *Ledger's* rival sheet, the *Star*, carried not a line of it. It was another Paul O'Neil victory for the *Ledger*.

The afternoon papers lamely acknowledged the beat. But they carried little or nothing new. Meanwhile Stang worried away the hours in his cell. Captain Tallant was waiting for him to break down and confess. But Stang did not break down.

Stang was released from jail. First he learned that he was out of employment. He was glad that Veath had discharged him. After his arrest and humiliation he would not have taken back his place if it had been offered. He considered suing Veath and the police for damages. But he knew that it was useless. The police and Veath still believed him to be the guilty man. Furthermore, he did not believe that money could right a wrong. He went from shop to shop, begging work. But he was too well advertised. He did not have money enough to leave the city. Finally he went to work as a laborer on a street construction crew. He had been a veteran of the war. He was not molested there.

"The Veath Diamond Case," as it became known to the police, went into the records, unsolved with a dozen other mysteries of the past. Other things supplanted it in the public attention. In a brief time it was forgotten save by those who had originally been concerned.

One of those was Paul O'Neil. Since the beginning he had maintained a belief in Stang's innocence. Too, it was O'Neil's stories in the *Ledger*, more than anything, which had effected Stang's release.

He had waited for the police to solve the mystery. A month he waited. Then he went to Captain Tallant.

For months he had worked intimately with the police and kept their confidence. Oftentimes he had been of decided value in solving difficult problems. Too, his reputation as the most clever police reporter in the city secured for him a prestige with police officials and officers that no man on the staff of any newspaper in the city enjoyed.

When he asked Captain Tallant to write a note to Veath recommending that he be permitted to work on the case, that indulgent official scoffed but complied.

Veath, though piqued at the style in which the *Ledger* had handled the story of Stang's arrest, was favorably impressed. He missed his jewels. He wanted them back, or at least the apprehension of the thief.

"Go to it," was his answer. "At least you can do no harm. Now what do you want," he asked as he offered the reporter a perfecto, lighting one himself. "Sit down."

"Absolute secrecy. The freedom of the premises. In event of an arrest and recovery of the diamonds while I am working on the case payment of the reward to me personally. The last is required in the form of a written agreement."

Veath's small, brown eyes snapped. He hesitated. Then he wrote.

"All right, young man," he said as he handed the reporter the paper. "As I said it can do no harm. The best of luck."

Before he left the shop O'Neil made a careful survey of the window from which the diamonds had been pilfered, the floor underneath and nearby, the walls, ceiling and finally the basement, searching the latter thoroughly for any trace of an entrance through which a thief might have emerged. He ascertained that doors and windows at the rear were proofed

with steel shutters, locking from the inside at night.

He returned to the *Ledger* office with but one tangible clue, the clue that Detectives Nix and Rolirs had uncovered but had been unable to penetrate beyond, the dropped jewel.

He did not resume work on the case until the next day. Then he walked to police headquarters. From the sergeant at the desk he learned that Patrolman Harry Reeves had been on duty in the vicinity of Veath's the night of the theft.

O'Neil had been acquainted with Reeves since joining the *Ledger* staff as a cub. Reeves was now on a daylight beat in another section of the city. The reporter caught a street car and sought him out, finding him, gloomily twirling his club, as his big feet measuredly carried him down a monotonous avenue.

That direct young man at once approached the subject of his visit. Reeves, on the night of the theft, had passed the store a dozen different times, he said, at intervals of hardly more than an half-hour. He had gone on duty at 9 o'clock and was not relieved until 6 o'clock in the morning. He had noted nothing unusual in the neighborhood, he said.

But the reporter could see that his sluggish mind was struggling with a remembrance which refused to be dismissed.

"Only one thing," faltered the big officer, "did I note out of the way. A spider. I saw a big spider in that window, hanging on his thread. I saw it twice."

"But why didn't you tell Captain Tallant that?" cut in the reporter.

Reeves dropped his head.

"I'd been drinkin'—— For God's sake don't tell the chief! But I wasn't sure. When I passed Veath's it wasn't in the window. I thought I'd been seein' things."

O'Neil hurried to the *Ledger* office and reported to the city editor the progress of his self-selected assignment.

"Break the story as soon as you can," was the copy-hounded city editor's only comment.

That night O'Neil hunted out Stang. He was still unable to find anything better than street work. He looked shabbier, thinner more worried.

From Stang he obtained a word sketch of the man Stang was indebted to, the loan shork, Isaac Brown.

"It was because he was over Veath's, I guess, that I got in his tangles," explained Stang. "Now he is pressing me. Threatens to garnishee my wages."

It was ten o'clock when he bade Stang good-night. On the way to police headquarters he passed Veath's. The blinds of Brown's office, the People's Security Company, were pulled down. But from underneath one O'Neil saw a gleam of light. An automobile was parked near the curb. Brown's car, he made a mental note. He noticed it was directly beneath the fire escape.

He crossed the street. The elevator had ceased running. With rubber-shod shoes, panther-like, he leaped from step to step upstairs. At the first landing he turned down the hallway and read on a door the terse legend:

"Isaac Brown, Loans."

No shaft of light filtered from its keyhole. He crept nearer, listened, heard no sound, and fearing discovery left the building.

Catching a taxi he ordered the driver to speed to the Veath residence. He found it lighted and Veath alone in the library, musing before the red coals of a wood fire.

"I think I have found the thief and we may have the good luck to find him at work tonight," he announced to the surprised jeweler as he was shown into the room. "I won't promise. But——" He patted a revolver in his hip pocket. "If you have one of these toys better take it along. You may need it and—a screwdriver."

Veath, though short, was all action. As he struggled into an overcoat he opened a drawer in the library table, thrusting into his pocket an automatic pistol. He found a screwdriver and gave it to the reporter.

The taxi, with the men inside it, sped, velvet-footed, through the traffic-thinned streets. On Sixth avenue, on which the Veath establishment faced, O'Neil cautioned the driver to pass the shop at ordinary speed. Two blocks past he directed him to turn and come to a stop on the opposite side of the street directly across from Veath's.

As the taxi shot past the shop Veath peered through the glass.

"Did you see anything?" asked O'Neil.

"Nothing wrong," returned the mystified jeweler.

"Wait!" urged the reporter, as the machine came to a stop. He pointed to the ray of light that filtered from a window of the usurer's office. "Ever suspect him?"

"Never!" replied Veath.

A slow hour passed.

"Now, do you see anything?" asked O'Neil.

The jeweler strained his eyes in the direction of the plate glass.

"I'd say a dangling spider," he slowly answered. He suppressed an oath.

The two men leaped from the taxi.

"Guard the stairway," O'Neil whispered. Veath drew his pistol and posted himself at the foot of the stairs.

Under the second-story window which leaked light was the fire escape which he had noticed earlier in the night. Its lower rung hung slightly over seen feet from the sidewalk.

O'Neil leaped upward, caught it and swung noiselessly to the landing.

He inserted the screwdriver between the sill and the sash and gently pried upward until he had raised the window far enough to thrust in his left hand. Then he drew his revolver, clutched the shade quickly and jerked, leveling the revolver as the shade fell.

In the center of the floor on his knees over a sawed-out square stooped a man, a man past middle-age, somewhat shabby, with corrugated brow and eyes as sharp as a rat's. His mouth was opened in complete surprise. In one gnarled hand was a fine, silken thread. It disappeared in the aperture. A rug was rolled aside. O'Neil shoved the window up.

"Thought in a pinch you could make an exit by the fire escape, didn't you? Now get up. Hold on to your fishline. Unbolt that door and stand aside."

He called to Veath. When the jeweler entered the loan shark's office O'Neil opened the window wider and sprang within. As he covered Brown they pulled the thread upward.

"Your spider!" explained O'Neil as the end came in view. He shook a diamond loose from it.

It was an ingenious device, made so that when it touched a surface delicate claws opened. When it was lifted they closed from their own weight. The device was cleverly hidden within the outward semblance of a spider.

Still covering Brown the reporter dropped on a knee and looked into the aperture. It revealed the top of the ceiling of the floor below. In the center of the saw-out was a small, round hole. It looked directly into the tray of lifnites. Near by the hole was a cork. O'Neil drew a flashlight from his pocket. The bottom of the cork was painted, painted the blend with the color of the ceiling beneath. He examined the hole further. It had been partly bored through. The remainder of a thin distance had been burned with a hot iron. He showed Veath.

"That's why there were no droppings."

The reporter sprang upright, dusting his hands. He saw a safe in one corner.

"Open it!" he snapped.

Reluctantly the usurer complied.

O'Neil pulled out papers and drawers indiscriminately until he came to a steel strong box. It was unlocked. He opened it, motioning for Veath.

"Look! He was hoarding them."

Inside was a collection of diamonds.

While Veath identified the sparkling crystals the reporter picked up a telephone and called headquarters.

As the detectives arrived he looked at his watch. An hour remained before press time—"dead line." Descending the stairs three steps at a time, he leaped into the waiting taxi, pressed a ten-dollar banknote into the sleepy chauffeur's hand and soon he was running up the *Ledger* stairs.

After he had written the story and the city editor had snatched the last page from his typewriter, he shut himself in a telephone booth and worried central until he had raised Stang's landlady and was speaking to him. He told him briefly of Brown's arrest.

"Veath will give you anything in order to make it right with you. He wants you to take back your old job and—accept $500 besides," he lied, as he remembered the $5,000 reward. "He wants you and your wife to have that little home in the suburbs you have been planning on so long."

The Mystery of Man and How to Solve It

By RUSSELL RAYMOND VOORHEES

PART I — ASTROLOGY

EVER since time began we have had mysteries. History is in many ways a story of mysteries and their solution. But while the different ages of history have each produced their own specific mysteries, there has been one common mystery that has been present all down through the ages, and is still to-day an almost unsolved mystery. I refer to man. If we read history as far back as we can find it we will find that men and women have been constantly seeking some solution of the king of mysteries. And to-day there is evidence everywhere that man is receiving more and more attention.

Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? What powers have I? What are my weaknesses? These are some of the questions that are being asked, and often go unanswered.

But why should there be no key to this master mystery of the ages? Most people believe in some sort of a Supreme Being. Some call Him God, some the Great I Am, some the Great Spirit, while others use various names. But without regard to religion most of us believe that the wonderful universe, with its many wonderful natural laws, didn't just happen, but was well thought out in advance. And if this is the case is it not reasonable to suppose that the same Supreme Being who ordained nature's laws, and made the sun to rise and set with exactness, has also given mankind a key to himself so that he might answer the countless questions that have been asked ever since time began, and which are still being asked to-day?

To those of us who have given the subject some thought and have spent time in research and study there is a sneaking belief that there has been given to mankind not only one key but several which will unlock the storehouse of mystery and will tell us what we are.

We will discuss these several sciences and see whether there is any truth in them and whether they can be used to tell us definitely about ourselves.

Astrology is, perhaps, the oldest of these sciences which seeks to impart to mankind a revelation of himself. The origin of this science is lost in the mythology of antiquity. It is sufficient for our purposes to know that many of the deductions of the ancients are still retained by the most modern astrologers, which is proof enough of the age of the science and of its almost unchanged form.

Astrology, as one would surmise from the word itself, concerns the stars. The real meaning of the word is that it is a science of the heavenly bodies and their influence on mankind. The old expression of being born under a lucky star doubtless originated in this way.

Whether the stars and planets have any influence on human nature is still a debatable question, with plenty of people ready and willing to take both sides. However, there are apparently some common proofs that almost everybody has experienced. For instance, we get up out of bed on a nice clear morning and see the sun shining and we feel just as happy as the sun itself. But if the morning is dark and gloomy and the sun has hid behind a cloud, then how do we feel? That may not be astrology, but some claim that it is the influence of the sun and the clear weather.

Some farmers always plant by the moon and claim that they have excellent results with their crops. That may not be astrology, either, but some claim that it is. In all events the science is worth considering. And we will consider it in such a way that the reader will be able to delineate character after reading this article, and will then be able to decide for himself just how much faith to put in astrology.

It might be well to say right here that to tell definitely just what sort of a person anybody is, it is necessary to have the exact hour of birth as well as the day, month and year, and also the place of birth; but for practical purposes of amateurs it will be enough for a starter, at least, to show how astrology can tell the character of people just from the month and day of birth.

Astrology divides the year into twelve parts, each of which is governed by a zodiacal sign. Each of these zodiacal signs gives certain traits to those born under the sign, and two people born under the same sign, but of different parents, are supposed to be of the same disposition and character. It must be remembered, however, that these periods are of about thirty days' duration each and that the characteristics for each group are more or less general. As has been said, the exact day, hour and year are necessary for the discovery of the fine points of a person's character.

Aries

Aries is the zodiacal sign of the first period which runs from March 21st to April 18th. This sign governs the head, and so we find that persons born between these dates are natural reasoners and thinkers. Their brain is always active and working, hence they love scientific thought, reason, philosophy and educational pursuits in general. They possess an independent nature and have their own ideas of right and wrong. They want to have their own way in everything and can only be controlled through reason. These people love order, elegance and beauty and so are not apt to be mechanics as readily as those born under some other signs.

Taurus

Taurus is the second zodiacal sign and rules the second period which runs from April 19th to May 19th. This sign governs the back and the base of the brain, and so we find that these persons generate life forces very fast. They are active and quick and do not seem to tire as quickly as some people do. They are very determined and are natural conquerers. Many of these people follow literary pursuits. They are inclined to be very studious, but in thought are liable to be imitators rather than originators. They adopt themselves to changed conditions and for that reason are natural leaders. Many of the world's leaders have been born under this sign. Their mental and physical endurance is great and they generally finish a task with plenty of ambition and energy to spare, while others are tired out. These people are governed by their sensations a great deal and for that reason should beware of flattery. They also possess a great deal of intuition and are very sensitive to psychic influences. They are zealous and jealous as well. If they make important decisions when alone they will find that they will be much better off.

Gemini

Gemini is the zodiacal sign for the third period and runs from May 20th to June 20th. Since this sign governs the hands and arms, we find many mechanics born under this sign, as well as workers in the realm of education and the arts. These people are very active and restless. They are always anxious and never seem satisfied. However, many celebrated speakers and lecturers have been born under this sign. Gemini people are apt to be

inconsistent and nervous, but at the same time are vivacious.

Cancer

Cancer is the fourth sign of the zodiac and runs from June 21st to July 21st. This sign governs the maternal breast and hence we find people born under this sign to be lovers of the home and family. They are generally over-anxious about money and desire to save it for the future. Often this trait is so markedly developed that they become misers. On the other hand they are kind, loving and sympathetic, their love nature often being their weakness. They are very sensitive to the physical and mental conditions of others and frequently we find them suffering as much as the hurt one suffers. Their minds are of a mechanical turn, so we usually find such people in manufacturing and trading lines of work. The women are often inclined to literary work and literature. People born under this sign find it very hard to work under others; they want to be the head themselves. Their will power is considerable and so is their self-reliance.

Leo

Leo is the fifth zodiacal sign and runs from July 22d to August 21st. This sign governs the heart and so we find that people born under this sign are frequently misled by others. They suffer a variety of inclinations and dispositions, but readily adapt themselves to changed conditions of living. They are active, aspiring and energetic, even going to great extremes in these. As thinkers they are very independent and are controlled by intuition rather than reason. They seldom make any great mark in the world, except when engaged in mercantile or intellectual work.

Virgo

Virgo is the sixth sign of the zodiac and runs from August 22d to September 22d. This sign governs the solar plexus and thus we find these people plentifully supplied with nervous energy. They are natural students of health either in the form of anatomy, chemistry or physiology. Many become excellent chemists. They have a fine and discriminating mind with a great aptitude in the acquisition of education. Their eyes are the kind that are keen and discriminating like their mind. Many have made marked successes at literary work. The best proof-readers are born under this sign. These people are also very fond of the artistic and beautiful and they also possess good judgment of color. They have a tendency toward materialistic ideas. Music is most attractive to them; they are natural lovers of it. For that reason inharmony affects them very much. Their artistic tastes are shown by their wanting everything to be tasty and elegant. These people have a very keen sense of feeling and for that reason cannot bear any pain or suffering. They are so sensitive that even their skin is smooth and fine in texture. They possess a strong love nature, but at the same time have a great deal of self-control. These people excell in almost anything that they undertake. They have great rallying power and even if they are down they soon get up again for another start. Selfishness, however, seems to be a strong tendency with them and one that they should seek to eliminate.

Libra

Libra is the seventh sign of the zodiac and runs from September 23d to October 22d. This sign governs the back, the lower part of the spinal column and the kidneys. These people are foresighted and positive, making it hard to reason with them. They will generally find that their first decisions are the best, so should make it a rule to carry them out. They are very susceptible to the psychological influences of others and so we find that they make good spiritualists. They possess great imitativeness, but are originators and inventors along mechanical lines. People born under this sign are inclined to be religious. They are affectionate and demonstrative in their love natures. They are active, industrious and social. One thing that they should guard against is licentiousness. Educational work seems to be the best for them to go into, as these people seldom make any great mark for themselves in any other line of work. They are fine students. They possess very fine sensibilities and are honest and just. Oftentimes we find that these people become writers and professional men and

women. They also possess considerable mechanical and artistic ability.

Scorpio

Scorpio is the eighth zodiacal sign and runs from October 23d to November 21st. This sign governs the reproductive organs and thus we find that persons born under this sign have strong passions and appetites. They possess a marked temper, are jealous, quite conservative, conventional, proud, apt to be pretentious, but possess great tenacity. They are somewhat inclined to be idle and especially disinclined to work with their hands. These people want to lead and be led, finding much joy in this dual character. They are inclined to be extravagant and noted for their self-gratifying tendency. In fact these people think of themselves first. They are friends as long as it pays, but when it no longer pays they can become just as keen enemies. They love book knowledge and the men are often to be found in government positions. In addition the men frequently become superintendents and overseers. In nature these people are cold, showing little if any feeling.

Sagittarius

Sagittarius is the ninth sign in the zodiac and runs from November 22d to December 20th. This sign governs the thighs and thus we find these people possess great physical power. They are decisive and are often too quick in their decisions and in their speech. They are people of one thought and one idea at a time and for that reason do one thing before they start another. They naturally hate secret and hidden things and are therefore very honest. But they go to extremes in everything. As friends they are very good, but they make equally as bad enemies. At heart they are kind and loving, with a sympathetic nature. On the other hand they are quick and high-tempered. They are lovers of science, hygiene and self-culture, and frequently make fine musicians. They are born enemies of licentiousness.

Capricorn

Capricorn is the tenth zodiacal sign and runs from December 21st to January 19th. This sign governs the knees. These people are natural reasoners and thinkers and are frequently found at the head of great corporations and business enterprises. They are high-minded and find it hard to economize in small things. They are proud and independent, positive and determined, but at the same time are sympathetic and love to do good. They are lovers of literature, art and education. Many fine public speakers were born under this sign. These people are natural organizers.

Aquarius

Aquarius is the eleventh sign of the zodiac and runs from January 20th to February 18th. It governs the calves of the legs. We find that these people succeed best when in mercantile work. They are intuitive and are good judges of character. Many politicians are born under this sign. They can reason clearly and often make fine financiers. However, they possess too much pride in their own personal appearance. These people are faithful, but possess a nervous temperament. They seldom succeed as mechanics, but are natural traders. They love amusements and will be found to be liberal patrons of the opera, theatre, parades, shows, fairs and other similar forms of entertainment.

Pisces

Pisces is the twelfth and last sign of the zodiac and runs from February 19th to March 20th. This sign governs the feet and so it is rather curious that people born under this sign are fond of travel. These people are careful, anxious, restless and thoughtful. They love scientific and philosophical knowledge. They are fond of history and research. They are often very anxious about money matters and constantly have a fear lest they will have to depend on others in their later life. They are naturally upright and honest. They are sensible, affable and kind, but often lack self-confidence. These people have a very fine mechanical mind. Their sympathy for the needy and suffering is markedly developed. They frequently make excellent accountants and clerks and are found in positions of trust and responsibility.

The reader can, by going over the section that applies to the time he was born, see what astrology says about him and then will be in a better position to pass judgment on the science.

But in addition to the effect of the zodiacal signs on a person's character, there are a number of planets that have a direct bearing in shading the character and abilities. And everybody is not only born under some one of the twelve zodiacal signs but is also born under some planet which is his ruling planet. For instance the planet Mercury gives physical power, perception and memory. Venus gives conjugal love and good digestion. Mars gives love of family, patriotism and love of people. Jupiter gives love of the beautiful and art, including sculpture. Saturn gives thought and expression, together with scientific and religious principles. Uranus gives an occult power and a love of the spiritual. And so on for the other planets, each having some influence over persons born under those planets.

Now what good is astrology, anyway? Well, that depends a great deal upon how much faith one puts into the science. If they believe that the planets and the other heavenly bodies exert an influence over a person's character, then astrology can help us choose our friends, both in business and socially. It can foretell dangers before they happen, can guide us in picking out our life work and can even tell us how long we are going to live, what we are liable to die of, and how many times we will marry.

In the first place the signs of the zodiac are divided into four groups of three each. The first group, or fire group, includes Aries, Leo and Sagittarius. The second group, or earth group, includes Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn. The third group, or air group, includes Gemini, Libra and Aquarius. And the fourth group, or water group, includes Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.

From this classification we can pick out our friends. For instance a person born under the sign of Libra, which is an air sign, would be liable to assume a superior attitude toward a person born under an earth sign such as Taurus, just as air in nature seems to act as if it were superior to earth. And a fire person, or one born under, say, Leo, would soon show a water person, or one born under, say, Cancer, what it thought of them. As a rule persons born under the same classification of signs get along well together. The three earth signs would be harmonious, as would also the three air signs, or the three fire signs, or the three water signs.

But people will be attracted to those born in the sign opposite theirs. For instance Aries people will be attracted by Libra people, Taurus people by Scorpio people, Gemini people by Sagittarius people, Cancer people by Capricorn people, Leo people by Aquarius people, Virgo people by Pisces people. These combinations will be friendly and happy in business and marriage.

And so we could go on down through a long list of things that astrology can show us, but we have already given enough to enable any one to catch the spirit of it and test it out for themselves. And so, what is your opinion of it? Is it a solution for the age-old mystery of man? Possibly the best way is to try it out by reading your own character from the above outlines and then trying it out on some friends. If it hits true, then it should be worthy of more study, because without a doubt the greatest study of mankind is mankind.

In the next issue I shall take up the subject of Palmistry and show what that science attempts to do. Do you think that that science will help unlock the storehouse of mystery? Possibly and possibly not. We shall wait and see.

Current News

YOUNG LADY, 19, WALKS ELEVEN MILES IN HER SLEEP

Dorothy Sherman, 19, daughter of J. L. Sherman of Eaton, Colo., walked eleven miles in her sleep.

The girl, attired in her brother's overalls, sweater and jumper and her father's wool socks, staggered into La Salle, twelve miles south of Eaton, and asked that her parents be notified.

The girl declared she went to sleep and that she knew nothing more until she was awakened by a passing automobile on a bridge a mile north of La Salle.

WHY CANARY BIRDS BRING HAPPINESS

In Europe there is an old superstition, which has also found its way to this country, that canary birds bring happiness. In Germany Austria and northern Italy this superstition long ago took such a hold on the people that it is difficult to find a family which does not own a canary bird.

"If you have a little canary which is full of 'pep' and which sings from morning until night, you cannot help partaking of that bird's happiness," said an old dealer. "However blue you may feel, the singing of that little canary will help cheer you up and make you happy also. No doubt that is the main reason for the old superstition that canary birds bring happiness."

BENEDICTION DAY ONLY FOR BEASTS

One of the strangest sights of modern Christendom is that known as the "benediction of the beasts," which is performed annually in Spain, Portugal and Italy on St. Anthony's day, January 17.

This quaint ceremony is usually performed at the church dedicated to St. Anthony. One of these ancient edifices is in Rome, and here every year hundreds of owners of horses, asses, cattle, dogs, cats and even hogs bring their animals to be blessed and sprinkled.

It is believed that this service places the beasts under the protection of St. Anthony, and a few cents contributed to those who officiate at the ceremony is regarded as a wise investment, as a sort of insurance.

St. Anthony's reputation as the protector of the lower animals extends particularly to pigs.

DESERT WASTES MAPPED BY AID OF RADIO TIME

Many new details have now been added to the map of the Mesopotamian desert by the blazing of the trail for the Cairo-Bagdad air route and the method adopted to locate the exact position of the new geographical features has something of the romantic in it.

A small party of surveyors set out to cross the desert from Cairo to Bagdad to discover and mark suitable landing grounds. Before their departure the map of this region, which had never before been crossed by Europeans, was a blank. They made use of the stars for fixing their exact position, a method which entails an exact knowledge of the time. To this end a small wireless receiving set was carried, and every night at about 10:30 o'clock the chief surveyor would listen on it for the time signals sent out by Eiffel Tower and was thus able to correct his time to a tenth of a second.

It is a romance of modern invention that a wireless operator in the center of a great city should work his sounding key and all unknown to himself enable some stranger over 2,000 miles away to locate his position in the middle of a trackless desert.

COPPER SNAKE FOUND

A copper serpent, believed to have been the object of worship by prehistoric inhabitants, has been found in a plowed field near Monk's Mount, the largest of the Cahokia group of Indian mounds near East St. Louis, Ill.

Dr. W. K. Moorehead, scientist, who is directing excavation work on the mounds, pronounced the find important. He said only three other similar serpents have been found in American mounds.

The serpent is six inches long, made of refined copper and has four coils.

LIGHTNING FREAK

A marvelous freak has been reported by Mrs. Coleman Lyne of Jefferson County, W. Va., who declared that after lightning had struck a small pear tree near her chicken yard she went out to look after a hen whose eggs were soon to hatch.

She found the lightning had run down the fence a short distance to the nest, and there was the skeleton of the hen in the exact position in which she had set up on the nest.

The bones were as clean as if they had been scraped, and the meat and feathers lay near by not even scorched. None of the eggs had been cracked, but on close inspection a small hole was found in the end of each and the inside of the shell burned out as clean as a new pin.

RED SNOW IN AMERICA

Last summer this phenomenon made its appearance in the Rocky Mountain National Park, to the wonder of tourists. The great masses of color present in the snow fields of the higher elevations are due to billions of tiny organisms, half plant, half animal, that have the power of movement, growth and reproduction. The organism is an Arctic species known as *Protococcus nivalis*, and it has been found in Glacier and Mount Ranier National Parks only within the past decade. The color reaches its maximum density about a quarter of an inch below the surface of the snow; on the tongue, its flavor suggests watermelon. It is a mystery how the spore traversed such great distances, but it is supposed to have traveled on the Chinook winds.

NO GHOSTS AT ALL

Another good "spook" story has gone glimmering. The theory that a house in Highlawn, W. Va., was haunted and that spirits were making definite and noisy demonstrations was exploded when the flooring on the top story was removed and the house cat, which had been imprisoned there for several days, marched blithely forth with nine little kittens in her wake.

For several days weird sounds had been emanating from various sources on the top floor of the house and the occupants, who recently moved in, were beginning to fear that there was after all something in the superstition about houses being haunted.

When the family moved in it was necessary to have certain repairs made to the electric wiring. A part of the flooring was removed and later replaced. The cat went beneath the flooring when it was torn up and was imprisoned inside by the electricians in finishing their work.

STARVING RUSSIANS EAT DOGS, CATS AND HORSES

All the dogs, cats and horses in the village of Samovolna Ivanovaka, with a population of 14,000, have been eaten by the famished natives. In places of about 5,000 population, in the Pugachow region, people are dying from hunger at the rate of fifty a day.

Banditry, which broke out at Pugachow and in surrounding territory, has been stopped by the use of Government troops. The bandits looted warehouses, railroad trains and supply stations.

American Relief Administration officials, who are conducting the free mess, feeding children in various sections here, report that nothing was taken from their warehouses. As a mark of respect the bandits left these places unmolested.

The effect of the Hoover food remittance plan is being felt in this and other sections. Reports of the delivery of the first batch of remittances in the Moscow territory have brought joy to the suffering.

RUINS OF INCREDIBLE AGE

Are we on the brink of a revelation of life in the iron and bronze ages? Excavators in the ruins of an ancient village near Rome uncovered several two-room structures of marble, granite and concrete. The metal implements and weapons found seem to indicate an age much more than 50 centuries. There are some who believe the hills around Rome contain remains of every stage of civilization, and that the original founder of the city may have occupied one of these buried villages.

NO MYSTERY

Willetta Higgins, the Janesville, Wis., girl who claims to be able to smell colors and to hear by the sense of touch, is neither totally deaf nor totally blind, Dr. Joseph Jastrow, head of the Psychological Department of the University of Wisconsin, announced recently.

Tests are made by the professor, with Miss Higgins as the subject, in the university laboratories. Articles about the girl have appeared in magazines and newspapers.

"There is no miracle or mystery involved," said Dr. Jastrow. "I have no hesitation in saying that the tests, so far as they went, gave not the slightest indication of a possession by this girl of any unusual sense, and that on the contrary indications are perfectly clear that she gets a knowledge of color through such portion of vision as remains to her. The same is true of hearing by vibration."

PILES OF PAPER TAKE THE PLACE OF WOOD

They are making piles of paper in California. On a long wooden cylinder a long roll of tarred paper with glued edges is wound and covered with cord. Over this another band of paper, much narrower, is wound diagonally like the bandage on a wounded arm. The cylinder is revolved while it is bound with more cord, hot glue being applied continuously. After three layers of paper have been put in place, the wooden cylinder is removed and the paper is reinforced with a coarse mesh.

A mixture of cement and sand is squirted all over the cylinder with a force of 2 1-2 kilograms to the square centimeter, and several cylinders are joined end to end with the same cement so as to make a pile 60 feet long and from 18 to 30 inches in diameter.

A square steel head is fitted over the top to receive the shocks of the piledriver.

Each pile weighs about six tons. Engineers say these paper piles are stronger than those that are solid and they are not attacked by any known insects or marine worms.

BOTTLES BY MACHINERY

The bottle-making machine was born of necessity.

A French glass manufacturer was harassed by labor troubles in one way or another until at last he shut down his plant.

Then he set to work trying to devise a machine that would take the place of men in blowing bottles.

It was not many months before machines were installed and his work started again.

This was the forerunner of the American machine that is so nearly human that it can do its work better than men, and can make bottles for forty cents a hundred which cost seventy cents under the hand method.

The introduction of the bottle-making machinery exploded that theory, and when the manufacturer recites the advantages of the machine-made bottle over the hand-made, and adds that the number of bottles broken among hand-made ones was thirty per thousand, as compared with three per thousand machine-made, he clinches his argument against the older method.

One of the boons of the new method is the fact that pulmonary diseases, which were very frequent among bottle-blowers, have been almost entirely overcome by the new method.

Passing the blowing tube from lip to lip spread contagion, and the high death rate among glass-blowers was attributed more to this than any one cause.

In the machines compressed air does the work that was hitherto required of human lungs, and the sick and death rates have both fallen off since the introduction of the machines.

More than twenty-five factories are now turning out machine-made bottles.

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zitana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by Chas. F. Oursler.
13. "Under a Mask," by Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,444," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by Chas. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by Redfield Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline C. Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29. "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by Beulah Poynter.
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector J. Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieutenant Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by C. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign on the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura Reid Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William Hamilton Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by Ethel Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by William H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by Chas. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. H. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by Hamilton Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by Ethel Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thos. J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Andreen.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
76 "The Spirit Witness," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
77 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by Wm. Kofoed.
80 "A Keyless Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie.
81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "A Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.
86 "The Face in the Crowd," by Marc Edmund Jones.
87 "The Man in Room No. 7," by Chas. F. Oursler.
88 "Four Ten-Dollar Bills," by Henry G. Howland.
89. "A Challenge to Power," by Dr. Harry Enton.
90 "The House Next-Door," by Police Captain Howard.
91 "The Trance Detective," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
92 "Friday at Twelve," by Katherine Stagg.
93 "By the Left Hand," by Hamilton Craigie.
94 "The Melody of Death," by Jack Bechdolt.
95 "The Trick of the Great Yen How," by William Hamilton Osborne.
96 "At Moriarity's," by Fred S. Shuey.
97 "The Last Star of the Films," by Jack Bechdolt.
98 "Counterfeit Clues," by Chas. F. Oursler.
99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "A Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
102 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by Gottlieb Jacobs.

If you cannot procure any of the numbers you want from your newsdealer, send us the price, ten cents, in money or postage stamps, and we will mail them to you postage free.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 168 West Twenty-third Street, New York City

Our Ten-Cent Hand Books

Useful, Instructive, and Amusing. They contain Valuable Information on Almost Every Subject.

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies and curious games of cards.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instructions on all leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book.

No. 3. HOW TO FLIRT.—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of handkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers.

No. 5. HOW TO MAKE LOVE.—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed, with many curious and interesting things not generally known.

No. 7. HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, parroquet, parrot, etc.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 13. HOW TO DO IT; Or, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 14. HOW TO MAKE CANDY.—A complete handbook for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrups, essences, etc.

No. 18. HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple and almost costless.

No. 20. HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.—A most complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment. It contains more for the money than any book published.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full directions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations. By Professor W. Macdonald.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Every one is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc.

No. 30. HOW TO COOK.—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes.

No. 33. HOW TO BEHAVE.—Containing the rules and etiquete of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

No. 35. HOW TO PLAY GAMES.—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, back-gammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 40. HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated.

No. 41. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 46. HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated.

No. 49. HOW TO DEBATE.—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debates, questions for discussion and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

No. 50. HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS. A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. Illustrated.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 10c. per copy, in money or stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, - - - - 168 West 23d Street, New York.

GREATEST WONDER
Latest European Invention
Become popular! Play this Jazzy Fluta! Play all the Hits, no lessons required!—Wonderful tune.
For Parties and Entertainments
7 Popular Songs FREE
SEND NO MONEY.
Pay Postman only $2.95 on arrival of Fluta.
N. Y. Oriol Co., 18 Park Row, N.Y.C.
PLAY IT WITHOUT LEARNING

$——— OLD MONEY WANTED ———$

$2 to $500 EACH paid for hundreds of old coins dated before 1895. Keep ALL odd or old money. Send 10 cents for New Illustrated Coin Value Book, 4 x 6. Get Posted. You may have valuable coins.
Clarke Coin Co., Avenue 13, Le Roy, N. Y.

STOP DAILY GRIND., Start Silvering Mirrors, auto headlights, tableware, etc. Plans free.
CLARENCE SPRINKLE,
Department 81, Marion, Indiana

TELESCOPE FREE

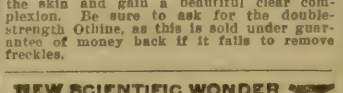
Brass bound. Opens over 2 feet long. You can see objects a mile away. Given for selling 10 pckgs. Bluine at 10c a pckg. Write today
BLUINE MFG. CO., 648, Mill St., Concord Jct. Mass.

FRECKLES

Don't Hide Them With a Veil; Remove Them With OTHINE—Double Strength

There's no longer the slightest need of feeling ashamed of your freckles, as Othine—double strength—is guaranteed to remove these homely spots. Simply get an ounce of Othine—double strength—from any druggist and apply a little of it night and morning and you should soon see that even the worst freckles have begun to disappear, while the lighter ones have vanished entirely. It is seldom that more than an ounce is needed to completely clear the skin and gain a beautiful clear complexion. Be sure to ask for the double-strength Othine, as this is sold under guarantee of money back if it fails to remove freckles.

NEW SCIENTIFIC WONDER



PRICE 10 C. 3 for 25c.—BIG FUN

BOYS You apparently see thru clothes, Wood, Stone, any object. See Bones in Flesh. A Magic Trick Novelty FREE with each X-Ray.
MARVEL MFG. CO., Dept. 13 NEW HAVEN, CONN.

DRAKE'S PRACTICAL MECHANICAL BOOKS

Be An Expert in Your Line!

While most men are working for mere living wages—and hunting jobs—business is always hunting experts—men who can earn $3,000 to $10,000 a year.

A FEW PENNIES A DAY

Be a success. Put yourself in the big-pay class. You can easily do it, for a few cents a day and a little study in your spare time. Drake's Practical Home Study Books are prepared expressly for this purpose. No instructor is necessary; all made so clear you can easily understand.

We publish Home Study Self Help Books for practically every trade and business, all shown in our big catalog, sent free. Here are only a few.

AUTOMOBILE BOOKS

Automobile Ignition, by Manly, Leatherette	$2.00
Automobile Starting and Lighting, by Manly, Leatherette	2.00
Brookes' Automobile Handbook, Leatherette	2.00
Ford Motor Car, Truck and Tractor, by Manly, Cloth	1.00
Starting and Lighting Troubles, Remedies and Repairs, by Manly, Leatherette	3.00
Automobile Battery Care and Repair, by Manly, Leatherette	2.00
Automobile Catechism and Repair Manual, Leatherette	1.50
Tires and Vulcanizing, by Tufford, Cloth	2.00
Gas and Oil Engine Handbook, Cloth	1.50
Automobile Upkeep and Care, by Manly, Cloth	1.00
Motorcycle Handbook, by Manly, Cloth	1.50

ELECTRICAL BOOKS

Practical Applied Electricity	$2.00	Motion Picture Operation	$1.50
Alternating Current	1.50	Drake's Electrical Dictionary	1.50
Electric Motor Control Systems	1.50	Electric Motors, Direct, Alternating	1.50
Wiring Diagrams and Descriptions	1.50	Drake's Telephone Handbook	1.50
Electrical Tables and Data	1.50	Modern American Telephony	2.00
Armature and Magnet Winding	1.50	Wireless, Telegraph and Telephone Handbook, Cloth	1.25
Modern Electrical Construction	1.50	Telegraphy Self-Taught, Cloth	1.25
Electricians' Operating and Testing	1.50		

SHOP PRACTICE BOOKS

Sheet Metal Workers' Manual, Leatherette	$2.00
Oxy-Acetylene Welding and Cutting, Leatherette	1.75
Slide Rule and Logarithmic Tables, Leatherette	2.00
Handbook for Millwrights, Cloth	2.00
Machine Shop Practice, Cloth	2.00
Mechanical Drawing and Machine Design, Cloth	2.00
Pattern Making, Cloth	1.50

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

Mark on this page the books you want and send in, with the price. Books will be sent postpaid. If not satisfactory, return in five days and money will be promptly refunded. Which books will help you? Mark them now.

BIG CATALOG FREE

Many more Home Self Helps fully described in our new book, sent free. Send Today.
FREDERICK J. DRAKE & CO., Publishers 1022 Michigan Ave., Chicago
Drake Books Are for Sale at All Book Stores.

ISLANDS ON SALE AT $6,000 EACH.

Any wealthy American who wants to taste the joys of being virtually king of his own domain will find an opportunity to gratify his desire on some islands just off the Corsican coast that are being offered for sale for $6,000. They comprise about 300 acres and offer every inducement to devotees to hunting and fishing. The announcement that these islands are for sale, the owners of them believe, will attract many inquiries.

The only question concerning them, however, is whether any person has the right to dispose of such property within France's territorial waters. The islands are only a mile off the coast of Corsica, which has belonged to France for 150 years, but an Italian syndicate which represents the present owners of the islands declares they have never abandoned their claim to Italian sovereignty over their property.

Therefore any buyer of these islands will have to take a chance that Rome will some day insist on the payment of back taxes for two centuries, or may even demand annexation of them through the League of Nations to prevent the rocky ledges being used for fortifications in the event of another war in Europe.

These Are The Hours That Count

MOST of your time is mortgaged to work, meals and sleep. But the hours after supper are *yours*, and your whole future depends on how you spend them. You can fritter them away on profitless pleasure, or you can make those hours bring you position, money, power, *real success* in life.

Thousands of splendid, good-paying positions are waiting in every field of work for men *trained to fill them*. There's a big job waiting for *you*—in your present work or any line you choose. Get ready for it! You can do it without losing a minute from work, or a wink of sleep, without hurrying a single meal, and with plenty of time left for recreation. You can do it in one hour after supper each night, right at home, through the International Correspondence Schools.

Yes—You Can Win Success in an Hour a Day

Hundreds of thousands have proved it. The designer of the Packard "Twin-Six," and hundreds of other Engineers, climbed to success through I. C. S. help. The builder of the great Equitable Building and hundreds of Architects and Contractors won their way to the top through I. C. S. spare-time study. Many of this country's foremost Advertising and Sales Managers prepared for their present positions in spare hours under I. C. S. instruction.

For 30 years, men in offices, stores, shops, factories, mines, railroads—in every line of technical and commercial work—have been winning promotion and increased salaries through the I. C. S.

No matter where you live, the I. C. S. will come to *you*. No matter what your handicaps or how small your means, we have a plan to meet your circumstances. No matter how limited your previous education, the simply-written, wonderfully-illustrated I. C. S. textbooks make it easy to learn. No matter what career you may choose, some one of the 300 I. C. S. Courses will surely suit your needs.

Make Your Start Now!

When everything has been made easy for you—when one hour a day spent with the I. C. S., in the quiet of your own home, will bring you a bigger income, more comforts, more pleasures, all that success means—can you afford to let another single priceless hour of spare time go to waste?

This is all we ask: Without cost, without obligating yourself in any way, put it up to us to prove how we can help you. Just mark and mail this coupon.

TEAR OUT HERE

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
BOX 5262 SCRANTON, PA.

Without cost or obligation please explain how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject *before* which I have marked an X in the list below:

☐ ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	☐ BUSINESS MANAGEM'T
☐ Electric Lighting & Railways	☐ SALESMANSHIP
☐ Electric Wiring	☐ ADVERTISING
☐ Telegraph Engineer	☐ Show Card & Sign Ptg.
☐ Telephone Work	☐ Railroad Positions
☐ MECHANICAL ENGINEER	☐ ILLUSTRATING
☐ Mechanical Draftsman	☐ Cartooning
☐ Machine Shop Practice	☐ Private Secretary
☐ Toolmaker	☐ Business Correspondent
☐ Gas Engine Operating	☐ BOOKKEEPER
☐ CIVIL ENGINEER	☐ Stenographer & Typist
☐ Surveying and Mapping	☐ Certified Public Accountant
☐ MINE FOREMAN or ENG'R	☐ TRAFFIC MANAGER
☐ STATIONARY ENGINEER	☐ Railway Accountant
☐ Marine Engineer	☐ Commercial Law
☐ ARCHITECT	☐ GOOD ENGLISH
☐ Contractor and Builder	☐ Common School Subjects
☐ Architectural Draftsman	☐ CIVIL SERVICE
☐ Concrete Builder	☐ Railway Mail Clerk
☐ Structural Engineer	☐ AUTOMOBILES
☐ PLUMBING & HEATING	☐ Mathematics
☐ Sheet Metal Worker	☐ Navigation
☐ Textile Overseer or Supt.	☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ CHEMIST	☐ Poultry Raising ☐ Spanish
☐ Pharmacy	☐ BANKING ☐ Teacher

Name.....

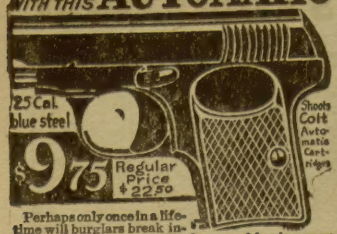
Street and No.....

7-1-21

City..... State.....

Occupation.....

PROTECT YOURSELF WITH THIS **AUTOMATIC**



Perhaps only once in a lifetime will burglars break into your home. Imagine the horror of having your wife and children at the mercy of brutal thieves, absolutely helpless.

Before this happens to your family, order this dependable AUTOMATIC today and be always fully protected. This wonderful automatic is an ideal weapon to carry in the pocket or keep around the house. It lies flat in pocket and HAS DOUBLE SAFETY which prevents accidental discharge. Comfortable checkered grip, perfect aim, beautiful blue steel finish rifled barrel. Holds seven shots and shoots the FAMOUS COLT AUTOMATIC CARTRIDGES.

SEND NO MONEY Send us today your name, address and mention number of Automatic you want. We ship by return mail. Pay postman on arrival, our price, plus postage.

No. 109, 25 cal. seven shots blue steel. Regular price $22.50. Our price - - - - - - - - - - **$9.75**

No. 509, 32 cal. same as above, seven shots, blue steel. Regular price $25.00. Our price - - **$11.00**

Military Model—Shoots **10 Shots** without reloading **FREE** extra magazine (worth $1.50) No. 1009, 32 cal. This Military model is slightly larger than the $11.00 automatic. Blue steel. Regularly $25.00. Our price - - **$12**

World Famous Automatic **MAUSER** Powerful and accurate. Shoots 10 shots, flat shaped, comfortable grip, fixed accurate sights, two safety devices, blue steel. No. 1509 25 cal. Val. $30.00 **$14.50** No. 2009 32 cal. 9 Shots **$15.50**

Six shot, popular swing out model. "Nickel" or "blue steel," checkered grip. No. 2509, 32 cal. - - - **$17.50** No. 3009, 38 cal. $19. Side Swing Hand Ejector

Genuine German **LUGER** No. 8509, 30 cal. Shoots 9 shots Don't be fooled by automatics that look like a LUGER. Quantity purchase enables us to sell this GENUINE LUGER at this remarkably low price. Latest model, safety, device, automatic magazine ejector. Sells up to $50.00. Our special price - - - **$28.50**

ALL BRAND NEW GOODS

Don't wait. Absolute satisfaction guaranteed after examination or money back. Order this bargain today. Just send (written clearly) your name, address and the Number of the Automatic you want. *Send no cash.* We ship by return mail. Pay postman on arrival our price, plus postage. Send for free catalog to Dept. C 109.

GUARANTEE TRADING CO.

64 Montgomery Street Jersey City, N. J.

BE A DETECTIVE

Earn Big Money Travel Big Demand Experience unnecessary. We train you. Write

AMERICAN DETECTIVE SYSTEM,

1968 Broadway New York City

SEND NO MONEY 14K SOLID GOLD TIFFANY BIRTHSTONE **$3.45** POST PAID NO MORE PAYMENTS TO MAKE

Pay postman only $3.45 on arrival for this 14-K solid gold hand carved birthstone ring.

NO MORE PAYMENTS TO MAKE

The mounting is 14-K solid gold, hand carved—the stones are all diamond faceted cut except the bloodstone, pearl, sardonyx and turquoise, which are cabochon polished, and if you can buy a 14-K solid gold ring like this anywhere for less than twice our price, return in 30 days and get your money back.

ANY STONE—ANY SIZE RING

DON'T HESITATE—YOU TAKE NO CHANCE—your money back if you want it—rush your name and address for the GREATEST RING OFFER EVER MADE BY ANYONE—ANYWHERE—ANY TIME.

Send for Your Ring to Department R-10

EMPIRE JEWELERS

"SELLS MUCH CHEAPER FOR CASH"

138 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

REWARD

ATSONLCD	
XOICME	
FRCENA	
RISSUA	
YALIT	
IREDNLA	
NALGNED	
DAACNA	
KRAMDEN	

FOR YOU

What are the 9 names of countries? The letters are mixed, yet you can make out every name by studying. The first is SCOTLAND. Now try for all. Send your list in a letter or on a postal card with your name and address.

A REWARD will be mailed you FREE with other surprises. Really a WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY whatever your age. Enjoy this pleasure. Address:

ALBRO COMPANY

AA-116, Station F, New York

From factory to you FREE Easiest riding, most comfortable wheel built. We'll ship on approval. You'll be delighted with the **18 exclusive features** of 1931 model electrically equipped

BLACK BEAUTY

—a large variety of models to choose from. Pick the one you like best. We send it express prepaid. A small deposit and **dollar a week.** Five year guarantee—4 months' accident policy.

HAVERFORD CYCLE COMPANY Established 25 years. **Big new catalog in colors—FREE**

Dept. 5210 Philadelphia, Pa. Send for it—NOW!

Be a Black Beauty Owner Agent

MEN—For vigorous development use "Vital Power Vacuum Massager." Wonderful! Write for free folder describing this remarkable instrument. **W. J. Lynch, Box 621-A, Springfield, Ill.**

INDIANS MADE SAWS CENTURIES AGO

The Indians of Central California made saws before Columbus ever visited America. James A. Barr has made a hobby of collecting prehistoric implements, and he has made a collection of 158 Indian saws. Three of these, possibly used to skin game or fish, were fragile implements of soapstone; all of the rest were of hard, black obsidian.

The Indians not only had no metal of which to make their saws, but they had no metal tools with which to make them. Each saw had to be slowly chipped or ground or polished with other bits of stone until it was shaped for use.

Some were serrated on the outer edge, some on the inner and some on both; most of them were also notched near one end, as for a handle. Considering the difficult conditions under which they were made they show remarkable craftmanship and skill in manufacturing.

In a single tomb were found thirty-one of these saws distributed in a semicircle around the feet of an Indian, who may in life have been either a wealthy chief or a professional saw maker.

In the same tomb were found many pieces of obsidian ready for shaping.

BE SURE TO READ

"Moving Picture Stories"

A Weekly Magazine Devoted to Photoplays and Players.

PRICE SEVEN CENTS PER COPY

The Best Film Magazine on Earth

FOR SALE ON ALL NEWS-STANDS.

Magnificent Colored Cover Portraits of Prominent Screen Performers!

32 PAGES OF READING **OUT EVERY FRIDAY**

Each Number Contains Portraits and Biographies of Actors and Actresses—Four Stories of the Best Films on the Screens—Elegant Half-tone Scenes from the Plays—Interesting Articles About Prominent People in the Films—Doings of Actors and Actresses in the Studios—Lessons in Scenario Writing—Poems, Jokes and every bright Feature of Interest in Making Moving Pictures.

THIS LITTLE MAGAZINE GIVES YOU MORE FOR YOUR MONEY THAN ANY OTHER SIMILAR PUBLICATION ON THE MARKET.

Its authors are the very best that money can procure; its profuse illustrations are exquisite, and its special articles are by the greatest experts in their particular line. No amount of money is spared to make this publication the very best of its kind in the world. Buy a copy NOW from your newsdealer, or send 7 cents in money or postage-stamps, and we will mail you, postage free, any issue you desire.

HARRY E. WOLFF, Publisher, **166 West 23d Street, New York City**